

Half of China affected in worst floods since 1930s

By JONATHAN BRAUDE IN NANKING AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

MASSIVE flooding affected half of China yesterday as torrential rains brought devastation to vast tracts of the northern and western provinces.

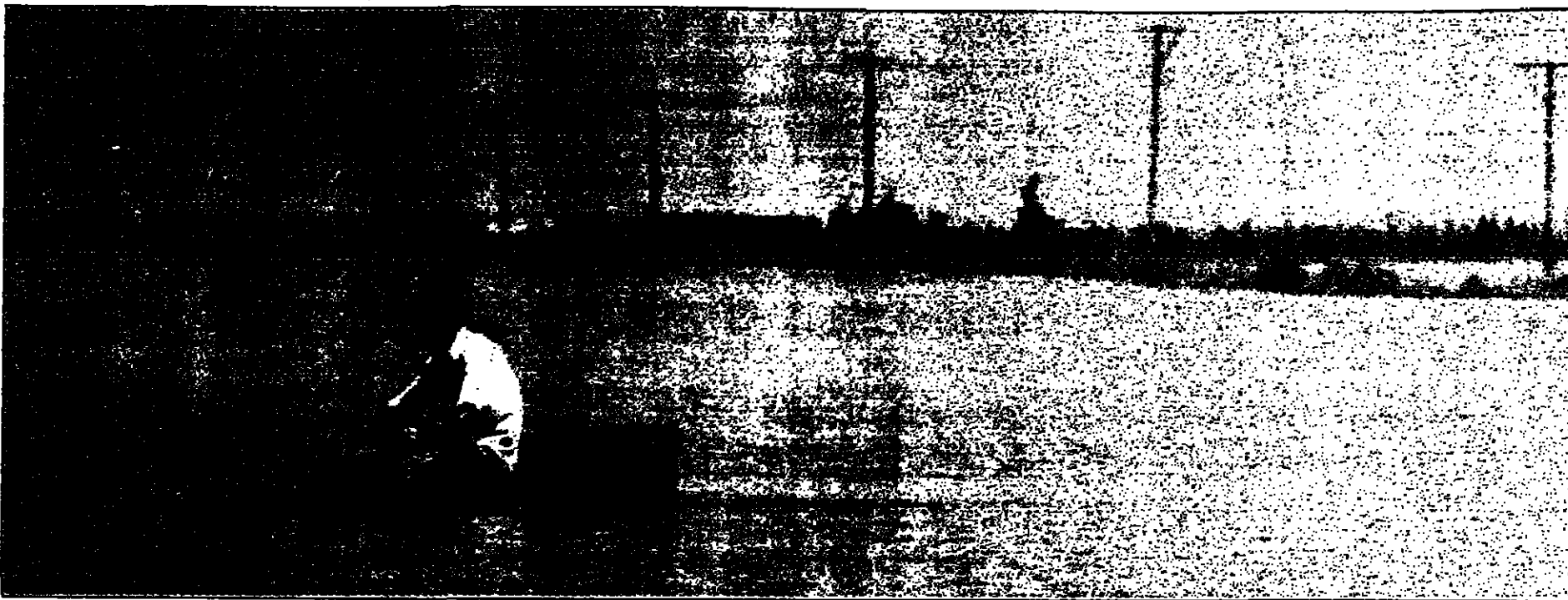
Eastern and central districts, already stricken by serious flooding from the region's network of swollen rivers and lakes, braced themselves for worse to come. The new floods surged down from the upper reaches of the Yangtze and Huai He rivers, threatening the ancient city of Nanking and prompting fears of destruction and disaster on a scale unseen since the 1930s.

A senior official at China's disaster relief office said that the main autumn grain harvest was under threat. "This is no small disaster," Li Zengyi, deputy director of the international department at the government's disaster relief office, said. The floods had affected half of China, and "even if there is no more rain, it will still take two weeks for the water to recede. That is too late for the autumn harvest."

More than 50 million acres of farmland has been submerged and grain stores have been heavily damaged. Thousands of peasants have been shown on television trying to save their grain stores by loading sacks into boats or trying to move them to higher ground. Though crop losses were bound to mount as the flood season continues, China did not face the danger of famine, Mr Li said. China's national prosecutor's office has issued a stern warning against looting or any corruption connected with disaster relief.

The floods that have swamped eastern China since early May have killed at least 1,700 people and caused \$4.5 billion in economic losses, official statistics say. The general logistics office of the People's Liberation Army estimated that in severely hit areas up to 25 per cent of the population was affected by hepatitis, dysentery, typhoid and other infectious diseases, the official *China Daily* said. There are reports that in some of the worst-hit areas starving people may be eating drowned animals in desperation, increasing the danger of disease.

Officials are confident that four decades of dam and dike construction will prevent a repetition of the 600,000 lives lost in the great floods of 1931, although the rainy season in the eastern provinces of Anhui and Jiangsu has been the heaviest for a century and the Yangtze river is a metre higher than the previous record level of 1954. Along the banks,



Scene of desolation: a farmer in a washing tub paddles across what used to be rice fields near the town of Fandao in Jiangsu province before the floods destroyed his way of life

thousands of people have been working day and night to reinforce the defences as the flooding spread up-river across the central provinces of Hubei, Hunan and Guizhou over the past ten days.

In a scene repeated a million times across China in the past few weeks, villagers from what was once the hamlet of Kongjia sheltered in crowded tents on a patch of high ground in the rural hinterland of Nanking.

Like her neighbours, Yang Duanying is making no plans for her family's future; that is a task they are leaving to Heaven and the Chinese Communist party. "Let us see what Heaven will arrange for us," Mrs Yang said stoically. Like 400,000 others in China's Jiangsu province, she no longer has a home to go to. In the small tent she now occupies with her family are all the possessions she managed to salvage as the flood waters of the Su He river engulfed her house: a thermos flask, half a dozen bowls, several pairs of chopsticks and a water melon.

The Su He is a minor tributary of China's great Yangtze. There are hundreds of rivers like it flowing through Jiangsu and neighbouring Anhui province. Most have burst their banks as this summer's freak rains overwhelmed the intricate network of dams and dikes China has built since the communists took power in 1949. Some of those dams have now had to be blown up to divert water from the brimming Huai He river which, like the Yangtze,

flows through the stricken provinces. Without the destruction of the dams, cities nearer the coast might now be under water.

In Jiangsu province alone, four million people have been evacuated from their homes although most will eventually

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Ministers were warned of BCCI corruption

By SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

LETTERS warning of widespread corruption at the failed Bank of Credit and Commerce International were shelved between ministers last year, but no action was taken.

The government came under renewed pressure last night to call a full enquiry as officials confirmed that letters from BCCI staff alleging embezzlement were passed from the Treasury, under the chancellorship of John Major, to Michael Howard,

the employment secretary, and then to Nicholas Ridley, who was industry secretary. Tony Benn, the Labour MP for Chesterfield, who first passed on the letters, disclosed that he had received an acknowledgement from Mr Major's office at the Treasury last July that the then chancellor had received the letters and that they had been passed to Mr Howard.

The industry department said it could find no trace of the letter which was apparently sent the day Mr Ridley resigned. None of the department's passed on the warnings to the Bank of England, in spite of a minister assuring the Lords in April 1990 that the bank was keeping BCCI under "continued supervision". John MacGregor, the leader of the House, denied any ministerial cover-up. "I can assure you there is no question of trying to cover up," he told MPs when he stood in for Mr Major at prime minister's question time.

He indicated that Norman Lamont, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, would be reviewing the Treasury's handling of the BCCI affair. MPs on the all-party parliamentary group set up to fight for help for the

bank's depositors came away from a meeting with Mr Lamont also believing a review would be ordered. Treasury sources insisted that the Chancellor would wait until hearing the evidence from Robin Leigh-Pemberton, governor of the Bank of England, to the Commons Treasury committee next Tuesday, before deciding if any further enquiry is needed.

Mr Howard confirmed yesterday that he received two letters from BCCI staff. They had been sent by Mr Benn to the Treasury, which had passed them to Mr Howard because they referred to redundancies at the bank.

One letter passed to Mr Howard was from Vivian Ambrose, a member of BCCI's UK regional inspection department, who told of "widespread corruption and nepotism" in the bank's organisation, and "apparent incompetence" by the bank's executives. In his reply to Mr Benn, Mr Howard wrote on July 14, 1990: "... in view of the comments that Mr Ambrose makes about the conduct of his employer relating both to trading activities and to redundancy arrangements, I am copying this correspondence to Nicholas Ridley who may wish to comment on these points."

Mr Howard also told Mr Benn: "I am sorry to hear about the difficult situation Mr Ambrose is in but I am afraid that I can be of little help. Any decision to make redundancies must lie with the employer."

Yesterday Mr Howard said: "I received the letters, I dealt with those parts of the letters which were within my department's responsibility and I forwarded the letters to the DTI." The industry department said: "We have no trace of the letter having been received. The DTI is not the department with responsibility for banking matters."

Neil Kinnock said: "The

government is in a shambles not only on the question of the letter ... but much more profoundly on the fact that since last March, and certainly since last October, the government and the Bank of England knew there were serious banking malpractices in BCCI." The BCCI scandal went to the heart of regulation of the financial system and threatened the reputation of the City of London, he added.

In a letter to Mr Major, the Labour leader challenged the prime minister's comments on the collapse of the bank. "It is now clear that many customers and investors in BCCI could not have had access to information which was available to the Bank of England and to the Treasury over years in which, coincidentally, you were a Treasury minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer."

The Lords is to debate the collapse of BCCI today.

Councils meet, page 2



Seve leads the Open

SEVERIANO Ballesteros, above, took the lead in the 120th Open Championship at Royal Birkdale yesterday with a course record round of 66 (Mel Webb writes).

He kept up his recent run of good form to lead three players, including Martin Gates, of Britain, by a stroke. Nick Faldo, the defending champion, was a further shot behind.

Ballesteros owed his lead position to a finish in which he had an eagle three at the 17th and a birdie three at the last. In contrast, Sandy Lyle, who won in 1985, had a 79.

Reports, pages 39-40

Major prepares Tories for 1992 general election

By PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

JOHN Major last night prepared Conservative MPs for a general election in 1992, as he confidently predicted that inflation would be down to 4 per cent by Christmas and below the rate of Germany's within a few months.

The prime minister was given a rousing reception as he addressed a packed meeting of the 1922 committee of Tory backbenchers, as news circulated that Labour's lead over the Conservatives had been cut to 4 per cent, according to an NOP survey for *The Independent/BBC Newsnight*.

However, the government's difficulties over unemployment will be increased today by a new international economic report forecasting that the number of people out of work in Britain will rise more sharply next year than in any other major industrialised country.

The new report from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, representing 24

industrialised nations, says that unemployment in Britain will rise to 2.7 million next year - the largest increase of any major country.

The OECD report follows the latest increase in unemployment in Britain, announced by the government yesterday. Seasonally adjusted unemployment rose by 59,700 to 2.3 million. It was the fifteenth successive monthly rise.

In the Commons, John MacGregor, leader of the house, standing in for the prime minister, led the Tory attack on a European Commission report published yesterday which forecast unemployment in Britain would rise to a rate of 10.8 per cent, or more than 3 million.

EC warning, page 2
Leading article, page 19
Bad to worse, page 21

Offer of new life for zoo

By SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

DAVID Trippier, the environment minister, yesterday offered London Zoo a rent-free site in Regent's Park and promised to ease the building costs when it becomes a smaller, conservation-based centre.

In a letter to Sir Hugh Rossi, chairman of the Commons environment committee, Mr Trippier accepted most of the committee's demands for limited government help for the conversion. But he made clear that the handling of the dispersal of many of its animals this winter will be a test for the troubled zoo.

He added: "In the absence of a declared private backer I cannot say how the negotiations with the Zoological Society of London about a conservation centre will go. However I can say now that it looks a very interesting and worthy project. The government will be supporting it."

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TODAY IN THE TIMES

YOU 7, ME 1

Barbara McDougall, sole wearer of lipstick and earrings around the summit table, tells Kate Muir about men and other clubs Page 16

MANDELA PLEDGE

Nelson Mandela has said that the ANC's incestuous relationship with the Communists must come to an end Page 12

OUTER REACHES

This portrait by Mary Cassatt is part of an exhibition which proves that artistic riches reach far beyond the capital city Page 17

TESTING ROLE

Lord Griffiths, a former policy adviser to Margaret Thatcher, has taken over control of examinations and testing in England and Wales Page 2

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Moscow mission for Lamont

By MARY DEJEVSKY AND ROBIN OAKLEY



High spirits: Norman Major and Raisa Gorbachev were all smiles in Downing Street yesterday

JOHN Major yesterday announced the despatch of Chancellor Norman Lamont to Moscow by the end of this month and doubled Britain's know-how fund for the Soviet Union to persuade President Gorbachev that the G7 nations had not left him empty-handed.

Aware of Soviet disappointment at the six point package offered by the G7 leaders, Mr Major used his talks with Mr Gorbachev in Downing Street to reassure the Soviet leader that what had happened was merely the start.

Senior British officials insisted that the association with the IMF and World Bank was a "big step forward".

Gorbachev censured, page 14

Why the poor clergy need marriage guidance

By RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

SO MANY clergymen are getting divorced that a leading church charity is thinking of offering grants for marriage guidance counselling. Meanwhile the financial stresses of clergy life are illustrated in a report which says that the expenses of married clergy with children can be as much as 135 per cent of their income.

The Corporation of the Sons of the Clergy, which gives more than £1 million a year to help Anglican clergy, their children, widows and divorced wives, says in its annual report that financial pressures on the clergy are affecting marriages.

Christopher Leach, the registrar, said: "This is one of about six stresses on clergy marriages. When a man who has held a good, well-paid job feels the

call to till the Lord's vineyard, of course the salary he will draw when he gets ordained is not going to be in any way equal to the one he drew."

A report to be debated at the Canterbury diocesan synod tomorrow, describes the strain of low clergy stipends. The Rev Jonathan Gledhill, rural dean of Canterbury, says in today's *Church Times* that a survey of diocesan clergy, which had a 70 per cent response rate, showed that the expenses of married clergy with up to three children at home were on average 135 per cent of their income.

He says: "One clergy wife related how she and her husband broke down and cried as they saw for the first time in black and white the causes of some of the strains they had been living with for years."

Married clergy take seriously the

Gospel call to poverty but in the boom years of the early eighties, few noticed they were getting poorer. He says: "The present situation is uncomfortably like an imposition by the whole Church on clergy wives and children."

About 8,000 stipendiary clergy in England earn on average £12,080. The Church Commissioners recently asked parishioners to give more to help fill out the pay packet.

The Corporation of the Sons of the Clergy gave more than £1 million in grants to help 2,500 cases of need last year. The grants to divorced and separated wives increased by nearly 50 per cent, from nearly £41,000 in 1989 to nearly £69,000.

The Viscount Churchill, the corporation's treasurer, says the main areas showing increases in grant

making were divorced and separated clergy wives and the retired. In the report he says: "It is sad that clergy marriages are breaking down so frequently and we are now looking to help in a new area - the costs of marriage guidance counselling."

He adds: "It is often forgotten that the clergy stipend is stretched to breaking point when two or three children are at school when, even in the maintained sector, music lessons, school travel and uniform must be paid for."

Zelda West-Meads, a counsellor with Relate, the marriage guidance service, said: "One of the biggest problems is the expectations of parishioners, that clergy have very good marriages because they are who they are. The reality is they have the same problems as anyone else."

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Unemployment up 59,000 as EC warns of sharp increases ahead

Jobless total 'will rise to 3m by 1992'

By PHILIP BASSETT
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

UNEMPLOYMENT in Britain will rise more sharply next year than in any of the major industrialised countries, which will see a general decline in numbers out of work, a new international economic report says today.

The new study, published the day after the government announced the latest increase in unemployment to take it beyond 2.3 million, will heighten discord over un-

employment in the UK following a report from the European Commission suggesting that the figure will rise to more than three million in 1992.

In the Commons yesterday, John MacGregor, standing in for the prime minister, said that the government regretted any increase in unemployment. He was speaking after the government revealed the 15th consecutive increase in the number out of work and claiming benefit.

Seasonally-adjusted un-

employment, usually the best guide, rose by 59,700 to 2,301,000, the highest figure since May 1988. It means that 8.1 per cent of the working population is now out of work.

Seasonally-adjusted unemployment is now 694,400 higher than in March last year, when the numbers out of work started to increase following a record 44-month decline.

Regionally, unemployment increased in all areas, although the rise was smaller than in previous months. The biggest increase was in the South-

East, including London, where the unemployment rate rose by 25,100 last month to 638,900, although the rate of 6.9 per cent is still below the national average.

The June rise marks a further slowing in the rate of increase. In the three months to March, the average monthly increase was 82,900. But the June increase, the lowest monthly rise since January this year, reduced the average monthly rise in the last three months to 70,000.

Employment department

statisticians were reluctant to predict any underlying trend in unemployment, but suggested that it might be at the lower end of a 60-70,000 range. However, they accepted that future months might see some hiccups in what ministers saw as a declining trend in unemployment increases.

Michael Howard, the employment secretary, said that the new figure confirmed that a falling trend in the rate of increase in unemployment had been established. But Tony Blair, Labour employ-

ment spokesman, said that the figures were appalling and the worst on record for June.

A report published today by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, representing 24 industrialised nations, says that unemployment in Britain will rise to 2.7 million by next year. It forecasts that of the handful of countries which will see unemployment rise next year, Britain will see the largest increase. The OECD forecast, however, is not as high as the European Commission prediction, published yesterday, that unemployment in the UK will be more than three million next year.

Dodgy days for moonlighting and tax evasion

How fares the black economy in the recession, as legitimate concerns struggle? Jamie Dettmer reports

SPARE a thought for the Arthur Daleys and other tax-dodgers of Britain, because they are probably having as tough a time as above-board businessmen. According to experts, the black economy is likely to be as hard hit in the present recession as legitimate commerce.

The view of the general public, often encouraged by tabloid press coverage, that a large number of unemployed people "moonlight" while claiming the dole is now being rejected by many economists. Dr Kent Matthews, senior lecturer in economics at Cardiff university, said: "The black economy's share of Britain's gross domestic product (GDP) will probably increase, but that is only because the main economy is falling. But the actual size of the black economy is probably decreasing as well, because people just don't have the cash to spend."

Debate about the size of the black economy generally intensifies during times of high unemployment. Arguments about how many of the jobless engage in off-the-books work are often deployed by politicians intent on influencing public opinion over tax cuts and welfare payments.

Dr Jim Thomas, a lecturer at the London School of Economics, said: "More self-employed and employed

people are involved in the black economy than those in the dole queues. Some of the unemployed are in it, but in areas of high unemployment there is not much demand. If all your neighbours are unemployed too, then there is no cash around."

As to the actual size of Britain's black economy, there is little agreement among experts. Estimates vary from 5-7 per cent of the GDP, representing about £35 billion, to 20 per cent.

Official sources are even less helpful. Ministers avoid estimating the size of the problem in Britain. "I'd try the Inland Revenue, if I were you," a spokeswoman at the employment department said. "No we don't keep estimates," the Inland Revenue replied.

"Now you are asking. What exactly do you mean by the black economy?" the trade and industry department said. "I'd try the police, yes, the police."

UK has worst absenteeism in industrialised world

BRITAIN has the worst absenteeism in the industrialised world, according to a new study which suggests that more than 113 million working hours are lost each year in the UK through people staying away from work (Philip Bassett writes).

The figures, published today by an international economic think-tank, are particularly disturbing for Britain's industrial performance because they take no account of the relative size of countries' workforces.

Even so, with a much smaller labour force than some countries, the UK has the largest number of absent employees and the biggest number of working hours lost.

The report from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, a Paris-based body covering the 24 major industrialised nations, compares absence rates across the world.

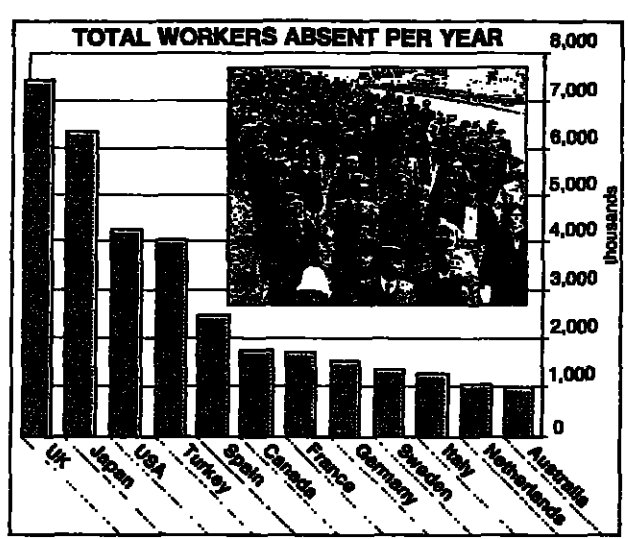
The OECD finds that Britain tops the international league table for the number of hours lost (113.3 million), followed by the USA (104.3 million) and France (51.2 million). The UK also has the highest number of absentee workers - 7.5 million away from work annually.

Lowest among the countries studied was Luxembourg, with only 177,000 working hours lost through absenteeism and 72,000 absent employees. However, the figures

for the UK on hours lost and the number of workers absent are particularly bad when set in the context of the size of each country's workforce.

Although the US is well behind Britain, for instance, in the number of people absent from work, its labour force, at 84.5 million, is four times the size of Britain's 20 million, as measured by the survey. Italy, with its workforce almost exactly the same size as the UK's, had far fewer absent workers - 1.3 million against 7.5 million in the UK.

Highest absences for men were recorded in construction, and for women in general services, with the lowest for both in banking and agriculture.



Ministers rejected the EC's report, with Mr Howard saying that its employment work was notoriously inaccurate. Labour said that the EC report was a devastating indictment of the government's economic policies.

In Brussels, EC officials rejected the British government's attacks on the validity of the study. Vasso Papanastasiou, the EC's social affairs commissioner, said that to get unemployment falling again would require not just a resumption of growth but special measures to tackle deep-seated problems affecting particular groups.

Leading article, page 19
Bad to worse, page 27

Councils meet on BCCI £85m loss

By DOUGLAS BROOM
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CORRESPONDENT

LEADERS of local authorities which have suffered losses totalling £85.6 million in the collapse of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International yesterday called for an independent public enquiry into the failure of the bank.

At a meeting in London, representatives of 35 councils also authorised lawyers to obtain counsel's opinion on possible legal action against the Bank of England and money brokers who placed municipal funds with the failed bank.

Mansfield council, Nottinghamshire, which has declared losses of £2.4 million, also announced that it would take independent legal action to recover its money. The council said it would be opposing the Bank of England's high court petition to wind up BCCI when it was presented on Monday. The move is a technical legal device to try to secure what remains of the council's investments before the bank's assets are divided up between the other creditors.

The public enquiry should be established under the 1987 Banking Act to examine the conduct of the Bank of England in the period running up to its decision two weeks ago to send in the receivers at BCCI.

● An attempt to form a national pressure group to represent losers in the BCCI crash attracted barely 100 investors to a meeting in Manchester yesterday (Ronald Faux writes).

Antony Gold, partner in the Manchester firm of solicitors which three years ago represented 18,500 Barlow Clowes investors, said that if BCCI depositors were to have any hope of recovering compensation they would have to be able to bring intense pressure to bear on the government and the Bank of England. The majority of investors who turned up at the meeting were Asian businessmen, some of whom were skeptical about what a national organisation would achieve for them.

Enquiry demand, page 1



Just visiting: Kenneth Baker, the home secretary, holds a press conference behind bars yesterday after opening the high-security prison

Former Thatcher adviser is new exams board chief

By NICHOLAS WOOD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

LORD Griffiths of Fforestfach, formerly Margaret Thatcher's chief policy adviser at 10 Downing Street, was yesterday placed in charge of the examinations and testing system in England and Wales.

He replaces Philip Halsey, a career civil servant, who is stepping down early from his post as head of the School Examinations and Assessment Council (SEAC) after three stormy years in which the tests devised for children aged 7 and 11 have been sharply criticised by politicians and teachers for being too elaborate and time-consuming.

The appointment of one of the most influential policy advisers of the Thatcher era to the highly sensitive examinations job will be seen as further evidence of the determination of Kenneth Clarke, the education secretary, to erode the powers of the educational establishment. It provoked an immediate outcry from Labour.

Jack Straw, the shadow education secretary, said it was a shocking decision and accused Mr Clarke of a vulgar

and partisan abuse of power. He claimed that Lord Griffiths' appointment would undermine public confidence in the national curriculum.

"It's one of over-reaching arrogance by a secretary of state who has only contempt for those whose views disagree with his... A national curriculum can only work if it's based on consensus and the widest agreement by the nation, not by one tendency of the Tory party."

Lord Griffiths, aged 49, said he was delighted to take over as part-time chairman of SEAC. "I have been in education all my life and it's something I have really made a commitment to."

He said that he would take as his guide John Major's speech to the Centre for Policy Studies earlier this month in which the prime minister made a switch to "pencil and paper" tests a key priority of the next phase of the reforms. His objectives would be to make the tests simple and practical and to reduce the accompanying paperwork. He wanted to ensure that the tests at seven and 11 examined the three Rs. They had to be

slimmed down so that they could be taken by a whole class at one time.

On GCSEs, Lord Griffiths acknowledged that questions had been raised about a possible drop in standards with the demise of O-levels. He had an open mind on the issue, but he recognised that public confidence in the exam could be maintained only if people were sure standards were being safeguarded.

● Local education authorities were warned yesterday not to take out their political prejudices on the pupils of grant-maintained schools and city technology colleges (John O'Leary writes).

Tim Eggar, the education minister, accused some local authorities of restricting freedom of choice by excluding schools outside their control from the information supplied to parents. He said that authorities could no longer impose a philosophy of education on all its schools.

Leading article, page 19

Baker opens jail with all mod cons

By QUENTIN COWDRY, HOME AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

THE first prison to be built in London for more than a century was formally opened yesterday. Built on 47 acres of reclaimed marshland, Belmarsh is a sprawling state-of-the-art jail with vandal-proof, steel-clad roofs, high-tech security monitors and a completely self-contained unit for category A prisoners.

Every cell has its own washbasin and flush toilet and windows that actually open - privileges that remain a dream for many inmates of Pentonville and Brixton. The £104 million jail's design, and an apparent determination by the Home Office to make the prison a showcase, has meant that prisoners are spending more than ten hours a day out of their cells.

Belmarsh will hold 840 prisoners eventually and have a total staff of about 800. Lord Justice Woolf, who reports this year called for inmates to be housed in smaller units, would approve of the jail's design. Most of the inmates are in four house-blocks, each holding 180 prisoners split between three wings. The

fourth wing contains office space and association areas, with televisions and pool tables.

The jail, opened by Kenneth Baker, the home secretary, was rushed into operation as part of the Home Office's response to the escape earlier this month of two IRA suspects from Brixton jail. It is designed to house all of the highest security inmates awaiting trial in London.

The home secretary said yesterday that it could take up to 25 years to implement all Lord Justice Woolf's recommendations for overhauling the jail system.

Mr Baker, addressing a conference in London organised by the Prison Reform Trust, also stated that, in the short term, reforms had to be funded from existing spending plans and that further improvements would only be secured if jails worked more efficiently.

The comments clearly confirmed speculation that the Treasury has persuaded Mr Baker to lengthen his timetable for prison reform.

135 staff jobs to be cut at ITN

Independent Television News is to make 79 employees redundant in a preliminary round of 135 job cuts (Elaine Fogg writes).

The reporter Desmond Hamill, named Television Journalist of the Year by the Royal Television Society in 1988, is among 42 taking voluntary redundancy. A further 14 will transfer to vacancies elsewhere at ITN.

The cost-cutting exercise announced by Bob Phillips, ITN's chief executive, has angered the unions, who have accused the management of reneging on a promise to allow up to a week for further talks on the cuts.

Sports reporter Giles Smith, and reporter Sarah Cullen, a familiar face in bulletins for the past 14 years, who has just returned to work from maternity leave, are also being made redundant.

Shoplift shock

Senior figures in Ireland's retail trade sector expressed shock yesterday at a high court award of nearly £400,000 damages to a father and son wrongly accused of shoplifting. The award totalling £380,000 was made by a jury at the high court in Dublin on Wednesday night against the Quinnsworth supermarket group, which yesterday announced its intention to appeal.

Seamen saved

Four fishermen were rescued by lifeboats from their blazing vessel, the Aberdeen-registered David John, 25 miles off the Norfolk coast yesterday. The four who were believed to have taken to a lifeboat were picked up by a ship the Fenix Fidelis which had picked up a Mayday message. Yarmouth coastguards who coordinated the rescue said the David John operated out of Lowestoft.

By the Times overseas
Australia \$2.75; Belgium B Frs 60; Canada Cdn \$2.75; Denmark Dkr 250; France F Frs 11.00; Germany DM 12.00; Greece Grd 14.00; Ireland Ir £5.00; Italy L 3,000; Japan Yen 1,500; Luxembourg Lfr 1,500; Netherlands Hfl 1,500; Norway Nkr 15.00; Portugal Esc 150; Spain Ptas 200; Sweden Sfr 16.00; Switzerland Sfr 3.50; United States \$1.00; USA \$1.00.

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Murder victim a Walter Mitty

A BRITISH businessman murdered with his wife in France was a Walter Mitty figure who may have mixed with the wrong people, a neighbour said yesterday.

Leslie Chorlton, found

strangled with his Dutch wife in a French wood 30 miles from his home, had grand plans for property development in the area, said Mark Preece, a former Kent policeman, who runs a camp-

site at Cressensac, the village in south-west France where Mr Chorlton lived.

"He was obviously involved in business in a large way. He never discussed that business with me. I certainly didn't ask him," he said.

Mr Chorlton once showed him plans for a complex of two golf courses, a hotel, conference centre and apartments outside nearby Gramat. He also had a project to redevelop a large military camp near Gramat, but Mr Preece said neither scheme came to anything.

Mr Preece said although Mr Chorlton was a private person, he did not maintain a low profile and once invited the whole village for a Christmas drink at the local inn.

More than 20 police are investigating the murder.



Strangled in the woods: passport photographs of Chorlton (left) and his Dutch wife Bernadette

LAURA ASHLEY

FROM TOMORROW

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Gorman sheds tears at libel hearing over Ian Gow letter

By ROBIN YOUNG

TERESA Gorman, MP for Billericay, broke down in the witness box in the High Court yesterday while giving evidence about help the late Sir Ian Gow had offered her to "expunge the scam" operated by a businessman in her constituency whom she is now suing for libel.

Mrs Gorman said Sir Ian, who was killed when his car was blown up by a bomb planted by the IRA last year, had been her mentor, with whom she formed a warm friendship.

David Eady, counsel for Anthony Mudd, chairman of the Billericay Conservative Businessmen's Association (BCBA), was questioning Mrs Gorman about a letter in which Sir Ian referred to her worries about Mr Mudd and his association, which was not affiliated to her constituency association.

In it Sir Ian asked for the names of fellow MPs who had taken part in "nefarious activities" by addressing the businessmen's association,

said he was sorry to hear that the BCBA was nearly bankrupt, and enclosed a cheque for £10.

He also asked her if the then Prime Minister (Mrs Thatcher) knew about her concern over the BCBA, and whether she had informed members of the House of Lords.

Mrs Gorman agreed it was a light-hearted letter in which Sir Ian was teasing her, but



Gorman broke down in witness box

added: "It makes me quite upset."

She said that Sir Ian was advising her as a senior colleague that Mrs Thatcher should be informed, and that he was willing to help her contact the right people in the House of Lords to warn them of her reservations about Mr Mudd's association.

Then she started a reply: "This is a warm and wonderful and friendly letter from a man...", and then stopped, tried to compose herself by taking a drink of water, and after several seconds told Mr Eady: "I'm sorry about this."

He replied: "Not at all, do you want a short break?"

Mrs Gorman nodded at the judge, Mr Justice Denck, who announced that the court would rise early for lunch.

In her evidence Mrs Gorman said that she thought Harvey Procter, her predecessor as MP for Billericay, and Tony Baldry, MP for Banbury, now a government minister, might have contravened parliamentary regulations forbidding the use of parliamentary hospitality for commercial gain by hosting dinners to which Mr Mudd invited tourists, who were paying £1,800 a week to stay at his manor home.

She said her own suspicions had been aroused when she attended a ball at Mr Mudd's house and found that others attending were Mr Mudd's paying guests. She then remembered that there had been Americans at a BCBA dinner which she had attended with the former prime minister, Lord Home of the Hirsel.

She claimed Mr Mudd had been "very cross and angry indeed" because he had to tell guests paying "a really high fee" to stay at his manor house that they could not, as promised in his brochure, "sup and dine" with an MP and a lord at the House of Commons.

Mrs Gorman is suing Mr Mudd over a mock press release in which he allegedly ridiculed her by referring to her lack of charm and to the hormone treatment she had been receiving.

The hearing continues today.



Emphatic style: a grey cashmere coat-dress and, right, a brocade blouse worn over a velvet dress, both from the former Dior designer Marc Bohan's second collection for Hartnell, which was shown in London yesterday



Belfast shop owner killed by gunmen

By EDWARD GORMAN

IRISH AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

REPUBLICAN paramilitaries shot dead a Belfast shop owner working behind the counter at his family hardware store yesterday.

John McMaster, aged 47 and married with two teenage sons, died instantly after being hit by several shots to the head at close range. He was killed at about 10.15am, just as 100 people were preparing to join a peace train from Belfast to London to protest about violence in Northern Ireland.

In a statement last night, the small republican paramilitary group, the Irish People's Liberation Organisation, admitted killing Mr McMaster, whom it described as a member of the security forces. Mr McMaster was a lieutenant commander in the Royal Navy Reserve which, security forces pointed out, has no operational role in Northern Ireland.

The police said the two men who carried out the killing escaped in a car which was later found abandoned in the republican New Lodge area of Belfast. The dead man's brother Alan, who tried to tackle one of the men, was treated in hospital for minor face and arm injuries. The killing, which brings deaths in the troubles this year in Northern Ireland to 41, prompted calls from Unionist leaders for better security.

The peace train made its way to Dublin where it was met by the lord mayor and members of the Irish parliament. Today, the campaigners will travel by train from Holyhead to London for a rally at the House of Commons.

Marc Bohan's Parisian chic brings Hartnell back to life

By LIZ SMITH, FASHION EDITOR

SWING tweed coats lined in swansdown? A short gold brocade skirt that dips to a sassy pair of tails? When such emphatic style appears on the catwalk at Hartnell, it is clear that the the revival of a couture house celebrated more for dressing dowagers than its chic is finally complete. Marc Bohan, the former designer at Christian Dior in Paris, who was appointed a year ago to breathe life back into the flagging couture house which had been on the verge of bankruptcy a decade after Sir Norman Hartnell's death, yesterday unveiled his second couture collection for Hartnell and proved that his typically Parisian brand of understated chic can successfully cross the Channel.

Mr Bohan, a designer with considerable international

clout and a string of loyal fans headed by Princess Caroline of Monaco, has tuned up his signature sharp tailoring to a triangular silhouette. Trapeze coats in colourful pink and yellow bouclé tweed swing over pinstripe and herringbone suits, again cut with a youthful flip to the hem with low-set pleats. An endless succession of perfect little black dresses was supplied, with or without an embroidered tweed jacket or feather-fringed cashmere wrap to wear on top. There were herringbone tweed trapeze-line coat-dresses and simple columns of draped chiffon that might have been designed with Princess Caroline in mind, although the traditional finale wedding dress of white satin blouse worn with feathered biker's helmet and

gauntlets might appeal more to her sister, Princess Stephanie.

Mr Bohan's first collection for the house received a warm welcome when it was launched in January. The timing for that debut in London was far from perfect. The Gulf conflict stopped many potential customers, all Bohan fans from his days at Dior, from making the trip to London. Lady Pamela Hicks, Lady Lever, Evangeline Bruce and Baroness Sandra di Portanova were in the front row line-up of fans at the first of his three shows yesterday. Backstage after the show he won the accolade that designers cherish more than applause—the gratifying sight of chic women pulling his creations off the rails to try them on.

Doctors say folic acid could cut defects in babies

By THOMSON PRENTICE, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

ALL women of childbearing age should have a diet that includes enough folic acid, a vitamin that can prevent their babies being born with spina bifida and other malformations, according to a report published today.

The recommendation, which could lead to changes in government dietary advice, emerges from a Medical Research Council trial involving more than 1,800 women in 17 British hospitals and 16 units in six other countries. The findings, published in *The Lancet*, are of comparable significance to those of 30 years ago which showed that rubella, or German measles, in pregnant women could cause severe birth defects, an editorial in the journal says.

Folic acid, a vitamin in the B group, is contained in a range of foods, especially liver and green, leafy vegetables. For 25 years, researchers have believed it has a protective effect in neural tube defects, a group of common severe congenital malformations, including spina bifida and hydrocephalus.

The study provides hard evidence to confirm that belief. Nicholas Wald, of St Bartholomew's hospital, London, the report's author, says: "It has produced a clear answer to an important medical question. Our results show folic acid supplementation can prevent neural tube defects. Folic acid supplementation starting before pregnancy can now be firmly recommended for all women who have had an affected pregnancy, and public health measures should be taken to ensure that the diet of all women who may bear children contains an adequate amount of folic acid."

The accompanying editorial says of the study: "It should lead to major benefits for

infants, mothers, and the whole community." The trial results show that supplements of folic acid in early pregnancy reduced the recurrence rate of neural tube defects by two-thirds among the women.

Folic acid is essential for the production of red blood cells, and a deficiency of it causes anaemia. It plays an important role in the development of the nervous system in the fetus.

"Over 95 per cent of pregnancies with neural tube defects occur in women without a previous affected pregnancy," Professor Wald says in the report. "This, taken with the fact that there is now a proven benefit, argues for increasing the intake of folic acid among all women who wish to become pregnant, not only those at high risk."

BT pledges to cure line faults in a day

By ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

BT IS to launch a customer charter to improve standards of service to its 25 million subscribers.

The package, unveiled at the company's annual meeting in Nottingham yesterday, will take up to three years to implement. It includes a pledge to provide timed appointments, and compensation for customers if they are missed. Faults will be cleared within one day.

A series of other standard improvements will be implemented by April next year. Customer services will be available from 8.30am to 6pm, Monday to Saturday. Bills and contracts will be easier to understand, and BT staff will be told always to give

their names when answering queries.

The initiative would be backed by an improved, money-back guarantee, Iain Vallance, BT's chairman, said. The company is to pay customers one month's exchange line rental, worth £5.71 plus value-added tax, for every missed appointment, starting immediately the appointment is missed. Under BT's existing scheme, customers can claim £5 a day after two days.

The customer charter was drawn up despite a dispute between BT and the Office of Telecommunications, which regulates the industry, over a new price formula.

Of tel clash, page 25

Scientists hunt Loch Ness miniatures

By NIGEL HAWKES

SCIENCE EDITOR

ONLY the tactless, and members of the press, used the dreaded M-word at the Natural History Museum in London yesterday.

The gathering was to launch an entirely serious scientific study of Loch Ness, Britain's deepest and most mysterious lake. There was talk of nematodes and diatoms, and limnological surveys using the latest line in high-tech sonars.

It would be a comprehensive survey of one of Britain's most precious freshwater habitats, Dr Neil Chalmers, museum director, said. "There is important scientific work to be done," he thundered.

But what of the monster... whoops, I'll start that again. What of the unexplained sightings along the loch's dark shores? What of St Columba, who in 565AD rescued a disciple from "a great roar and an open mouth" by some plain speaking? "Think not to go further, nor touch thou that man," Columba had commanded.

Nicholas Winchell, television journalist and student



Creature of the deep: not Nessie, but the greatly magnified head of a microscopic nematode worm

of Loch Ness, spoke with similar plainness. One of those responsible for setting up the scientific study, to be called Project Urquhart, he asserted: "There is no monster in Loch Ness."

As faces fell, he shifted his ground just far enough to rescue the occasion. "Neither I nor the others involved in the project believe there is a monster," he said. "Nevertheless, there do appear to be several interesting observations that have yet to be explained. No proper scientific study can totally ignore the anecdotal evidence of unidentified creatures. We make no assumption about the cause or nature of these observations.

We will investigate Loch Ness as a whole."

Project Urquhart is the brainchild of Mr Witchell and a public relations man called Terry Bartram. They have gained the support of the Natural History Museum, the Freshwater Biological Association, the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, the National Museums of Scotland, and Highland Islands Enterprise. All that now remains is to persuade commercial sponsors to part with £2 million so that the work can begin next year.

This would not be a vulgar publicity-seeking monster hunt, Mr Witchell said. "It is an alliance between science

and business to take on Loch Ness. The loch is very big, very deep and very dark — some have called it the Everest of the 1990s. Project Urquhart will be serious, scientific, painstaking and thorough."

But will it find — how can I put it? — new forms of life? "Yes," Colin Curds, of the museum, said. It most certainly would. Alas, it turned out that Professor Curds was talking about nematodes: microscopic worms of intense fascination to taxonomists but less alluring to the general public.

Professor Gwynfryn Jones, of the FBA, played the environmental card. Only by understanding Loch Ness would it be possible to manage the environment successfully in the future, he said.

Everybody got a say, and everybody agreed that it was a thoroughly splendid idea. Only Nessie, her privacy about to be invaded, kept her counsel. When she finally breaks her silence, we shall listen — especially William Hill, the bookmakers, who yesterday offered 500-to-one against her existence being proved to the museum's satisfaction within a year.

SATURDAY REVIEW

WALKING, TALKING



"This is a crude equation, but provided I am north of the river, I can go anywhere on foot in just half as much time again as it would take me by public transport."

Alan Franks talks walking with John Hillaby (above), Britain's leading exponent

FALLEN CITY



"Unless one is part of a comparatively privileged group, surviving in Moscow requires considerable energy and perpetual alertness. To doze is fatal."

Daniel Johnson sees history beginning again

SUNKEN ROCK

A tiny shop was the heart of a rock revival in the late 1970s. The shop grew into a record label. And then... Philip Basset on the rise and fall of Rough Trade

LENS CULTURE



Sunglasses have made movie careers, become a designer accessory and are even addictive as a way of avoiding eye contact. Liz Smith finds the eyes have it

The Times Saturday: order a copy today

It's been a funny old 150 years hasn't it?

SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S EDITION

PUNCH

150th Anniversary - 17 July 1841 - 17 July 1991

The 150th anniversary issue of Punch is out now, price £1.20. On the outside, there's a magnificent cover by Ralph Steadman. Inside are fine words from Miles Kingdon, Clive Anderson, Maureen Lipman, Alan Coren, Stephen Pile, Dillie Keane and many more. Plus, we name the Funniest Man in the World. And, of course, we print the funniest cartoons in the universe. Buy it now. There won't be another till 2141.

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Cavalier L 1.4	£11,085	1.4 16V 16V	Cavalier L 1.6	£11,340	Power steering, metallic paint	Cavalier SRi	£14,635	1.6 16V 16V	Cavalier L 1.7D	£11,650	Power steering
Sierra	-	Sierra 1.6 16V 16V	Sierra 1.6 LX	£11,464	Power steering, metallic paint	Sierra XR4i	£14,898	1.6 16V 16V	Sierra 1.8 GLX TD	£12,140	Power steering

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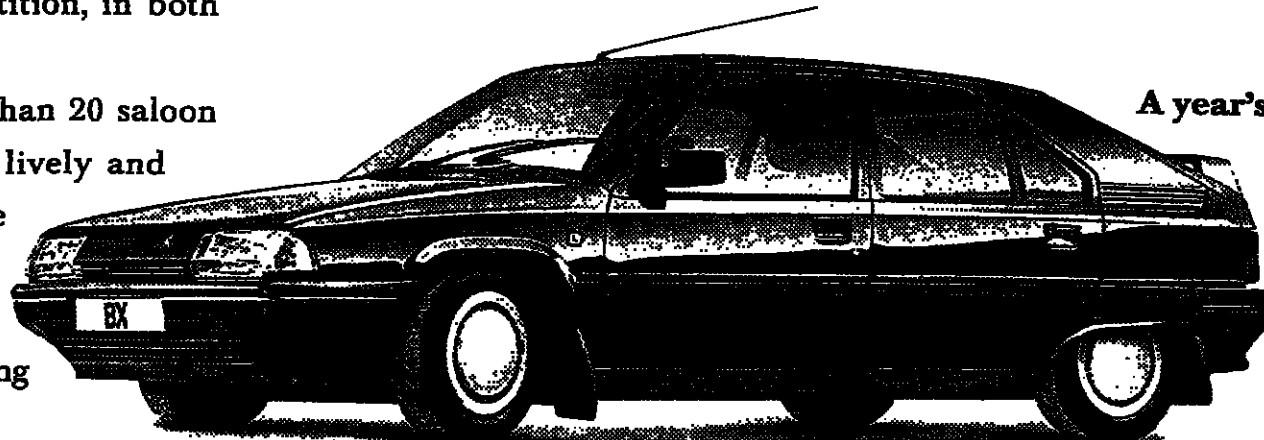
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جديد 1991

Cars can be cheaper in Britain than on Continent, study says

By KEVIN EASON, MOTORING CORRESPONDENT

EVIDENCE which claims that cars in Britain can be cheaper than those sold on the Continent has caused a delay in an investigation into the industry by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

Last night, Vauxhall gave details of an independent study of European car pricing which produced figures in direct contradiction to reports that claimed prices in the UK can be up to 50 per cent higher than in other European Community nations.

As a result, the commission, which was due to report to the government in August, is not now expected to disclose the findings of its 14-month investigation until October, while the new evidence is considered. Vauxhall commissioned the study because the industry was angered by the

commission's insistence on basing its findings on pre-tax prices in showrooms.

Vauxhall executives said that those prices did not take into account substantial variations in dealer discounts, cheap finance deals and "extras" fitted to cars in Britain.

Researchers from A T Kearney, the international management consultants, examined 98,000 transactions in 11 countries on cars made by General Motors, Vauxhall's American parent company. They found that, while list prices were often higher in Britain, the on-the-road price could be cheaper than on the Continent.

For example, a customer buying a Vauxhall Astra 1.4L car from a UK showroom in May 1990 would have expected to pay an on the road

price, excluding tax, of £5,739. The Kearney team said the equivalent car in Belgium, on the road and excluding tax, was £6,266, and sold for £6,601 in France.

The report has been filed to the MMC, and last night it emerged that investigators were now prepared to consider demands by car manufacturers that the survey be considered fully before the commission reports to the Government.

The dispute centres on how the price of a car is made up, with the commission's initial report checking only pre-tax prices, with some allowances for model specifications. Vauxhall and other manufacturers insist that dealer discounts and low-rate finance makes a substantial difference to the transaction price.

Low-rate finance has a 70 per cent take-up rate with Vauxhall customers in Britain, causing substantial savings, particularly at a time of high bank interest rates in Britain.

Duncan Craig, who led the Kearney study, believes that the commission will agree with car manufacturers that the final transaction price is the fairest measure and may have to alter its conclusions before it reports back to the government in October.

ON THE ROAD PRICES

Astra 1.4L after discounts and incentives May 1990

France	£6,601
Germany	£6,266
The Netherlands	£6,304
Belgium	£6,266
UK	£5,739

Source: A.T.Kearney study



Inside job: Nicky Harris, of Bonhams auctioneers, with a painting by Reginald Kray, the jailed East End gangland figure, which was sold yesterday at the company's Chelsea salerooms. The 24in by 28in work, *The Fight*, was painted last year and was bought by an anonymous telephone bidder for £280, almost double estimate

Spy in the loft tracks jet whirlwind

By NICK NUTTALL, TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

A COMPUTER has been installed in the loft of a terraced house near Heathrow airport to investigate mini-whirlwinds created by jumbo jets.

The phenomenon, which can tear holes in roofs beneath the flight paths, is believed to be caused by the wing tips and possibly the cowings of the wide-bodied planes.

A team of researchers at the environment department's Building Research Establishment at Garston, Hertfordshire, has been called in to investigate after a sharp rise in incidents around Heston, Cranford and Hounslow, west London. Similar events have been reported near Manchester and other airports abroad.

Paul Blackmore, who is leading the research establishment investigation, said that some of the vortices cause damage by ripping and dislodging the tiles, but the most destructive are the smaller, tighter varieties with spinning cores about two me-

tres wide, able to lift tiles and send them crashing to the ground. There are up to 400 incidents a year.

The team, which has been called in by the British Airport Authority, hopes that the computer will provide clues on why some houses suffer while others are untouched. The house in Cranford where it has been installed has been damaged eight times by the whirlwinds.

Pressure sensors have been

slotted into roof tiles, as well as an ultrasonic wind meter to measure wind speeds, which appear to determine the severity of the strike.

The research project is expected to take six months, after which the team hopes to identify roof and tile designs which are less prone to vortex damage.

British air travellers using 90 services to European destinations have been paying fares that are too high since

the start of the year, according to the Civil Aviation Authority (David Young writes).

It said yesterday that since January it had sent three lists of complaints to the European Commission about fares introduced by European airlines for travel between EC countries. The EC is now expected to make a ruling on the complaints in October, but until then passengers will continue paying the higher fares.

Ozone vanishes faster than feared

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

THE ozone layer over Britain and northern Europe is disappearing twice as fast as previously assumed, British scientists said yesterday.

A report by the UK Stratospheric Ozone Review Group, published by the environment department, confirms figures published in the United States

in April which show that levels of ozone in mid-latitudes in late winter and early spring have declined by 8 per cent in the past decade. That could lead to more skin cancer by allowing ultraviolet radiation to reach the Earth in greater amounts.

Environment minister David Trippier said: "The evidence is much clearer now

that ozone loss is not confined to the Antarctic, but is prevalent also in the northern hemisphere. A rapid reduction in the production and consumption of CFCs [chlorofluorocarbons] must now, more than ever, be our priority, in order to reverse the continuing upward trend in atmospheric concentrations of these substances."

Ex-council officers face fraud charges

Seven former council officers have been remanded on bail after appearing in court yesterday accused of conspiracy to defraud.

The charges against the seven, who worked for West Wiltshire district council, relate to the privatisation of its computer services department. They accused are: Gerald Garland, aged 61, former chief executive; Roger Pugh, aged 48; Frank Archer, aged 58; Roger White, aged 40; David Wilkie, aged 42; Richard Gilbert, aged 29; and Raymond Perkins, aged 56. Garland, Pugh and White are also charged with conspiracy to defraud relating to bonuses being protected in salaries, and Garland, Archer and Perkins are accused of conspiracy to defraud relating to retirement benefits. All were remanded by Trowbridge magistrates until January 30 next.

Rail death

A train driver was crushed to death yesterday in a collision between two freight trains at St David's junction, Exeter, Devon. Both engines were derailed and firemen worked for several hours to cut free the dead driver.

Lethal cocktail

Steve Marriott, aged 44, the Sixties rock star found dead at his home in April, consumed a lethal cocktail of drink and drugs, an inquest was told. Verdict: accidental death.

Body found

A murder enquiry incident room has been set up after the body of a man was found at the disused Belgrave hospital, Kennington, south London.

Attacker sought

Police are hunting a man who attacked two girls at their home in Ashington, Northumberland. They said the man — 5ft 10in tall, with blue eyes and of slim build — was dangerous.

Kurds bailed

Twenty-three Kurds accused of damaging property at the Turkish embassy in London have been remanded on bail.

Motoring, page 33

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Bank of Credit & Commerce International

A Statement by the majority shareholders

The majority shareholders of the BCCI Group were shocked by the abrupt action taken by the Bank of England, the Luxembourg Monetary Institute and other regulators on Friday, 5th July 1991 to freeze the assets of the BCCI Group and close its operating branches. This action was taken without any consultation whatsoever with either the shareholders or with the Central Bank of the United Arab Emirates, a member of the College of Regulators. Since April 1990, the Government of Abu Dhabi and related institutions have held a majority shareholding in the BCCI Group.

As is well known, BCCI has encountered various operating problems in recent years and has sustained substantial losses. In order to deal with these problems the majority shareholders have brought about Board and management changes and have injected substantial amounts of fresh capital into the Group.

In October 1990, as a result of the disclosure of various irregularities, the President and the Chief Executive Officer resigned. At the request of the majority shareholders an internal inquiry into these irregularities was instigated shortly thereafter and is continuing. The majority shareholders believe that they took effective steps in mid 1990 to prevent the occurrence of new irregularities.

The majority shareholders feel that they cannot absolve Price Waterhouse from all responsibility since they have been auditors of a major subsidiary (BCCI Overseas) for fifteen years and auditors of the whole Group since 1987.

Towards the end of 1990 the majority shareholders produced a restructuring plan for the future involving the divestment of all the Group's banking activities, principally by disposal on a going concern basis, with an orderly run-down of any remaining businesses.

This plan has been developed and refined during the first six months of 1991. Detailed discussions about it have been held with the Bank of England and other regulators, who were kept informed of developments at every stage.

A key element of the restructuring plan was the formation of three new and separate banks, to be based in London, Abu Dhabi and Hong Kong. Planning for this was at an advanced stage, since it was intended that the new banks should commence operations before 1st January 1992. With the active encouragement of the regulators various senior members of staff had already been recruited. The majority shareholders had been prepared to support the plan with such further injections of capital as would have been required.

Final drafts of individual restructuring plans for the new banks had been sent to the relevant regulators during May and June 1991 and, at the request of the Bank of England and the Luxembourg Monetary Institute, the latest draft of the composite restructuring plan was sent to them on 3rd July, only two days before the closure on 5th July.

The action taken on 5th July has resulted in severe problems (involving financial hardship in many cases) for more than 1.25 million depositors of the Group worldwide and some 12,000 staff are likely to lose their jobs. It has resulted in the destruction, at a stroke, of what the majority shareholders believe was a well structured and viable future plan. If the restructuring plan had been allowed to proceed the majority shareholders have no doubt that no depositors' money would have been lost.

In view of all the above, the majority shareholders deplore what they consider to be the unjustified action taken by the Bank of England, the Luxembourg Monetary Institute and other regulators on 5th July 1991.

The majority shareholders of the BCCI Group comprise: the Government of Abu Dhabi, the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority and the Department of Private Affairs of H.H. Shaikh Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahyan.

16th July 1991

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Patient sues over shortage of transplant kidneys

By THOMSON PRENTICE, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

A BUSINESSMAN who spent £50,000 having two kidney transplants abroad is suing his health authority for negligence in what is believed to be the first case of its kind.

Christopher Davies, aged 49, claims that the North Western regional health authority failed to ensure a sufficient supply of donor kidneys for transplant patients. Mr Davies, who has a printing and packaging company in Liverpool, hired a plane to fly him to Brussels for one of the operations.

His is one of two case histories produced by the British Kidney Patient Association yesterday to illustrate what it called a "fearful" shortage of donor kidneys in the United Kingdom. The other centres on Matthew Tudor, aged 47, an unemployed Liverpoolian whose mother, father and brother have all donated one of their kidneys to save his life.

Mr Davies's kidneys failed in 1967. He was on dialysis for ten years and on the waiting list in Manchester for a transplant for three years. As his health deteriorated, he decided to seek the operation abroad. In 1977, four months after contacting a Brussels hospital, he underwent a kidney graft there at a cost of about £15,000.

"I had to get to Brussels at short notice, but when I got to Manchester airport the last flight had gone. I was desperate, so I hired a plane to take me," he said yesterday.

Four years later, the donor organ failed and Mr Davies returned to a dialysis machine and to the transplant waiting list. He stayed on both for eight years and in December 1988 had another transplant in Belgium, at a cost of about £17,000.

Mr Davies did not pay for the organs, made available by the Belgian health service, but was liable for the costs of the operations and hospital care. He said his expenses totalled about £50,000.

Mr Davies, who has also qualified as a lawyer, said: "I'm suing my health authority not to get my money back, but because I don't think British hospitals should get away with leaving their patients for years and years in the hope that they will eventually get a new kidney. To me, as a lawyer, this seems like negligence."

In the other case history, Mr Tudor's first transplant was in 1972, when his mother donated an organ. It failed after two years and in 1975 his father donated a kidney. That one lasted until 1989 and the following year his brother William donated a kidney. The third transplant is reported to be working well.

Mr Tudor has married three times. "The kidneys have lasted longer than the wives up to now. My first wife left me because of the strain of seeing me on a dialysis machine, and it is a lot for a family to cope with."

Elizabeth Ward, president of the British Kidney Patients' Association, said that since 1971 about 37,000 people had died waiting for a kidney graft. About 4,000 people were on the waiting list and 2,000 had a transplant last year.



Currier of soles: Francisco Corrales, cobbler to the Ballet Nacional de España, with a line-up of some of the 500 pairs of dancing shoes he has made. Señor Corrales makes and repairs all the shoes for the Spanish company, the men's with metal studs in the soles to make the correct stamping sound, the women's from kid leather but with hard heels. The company is appearing at the London Coliseum until July 27

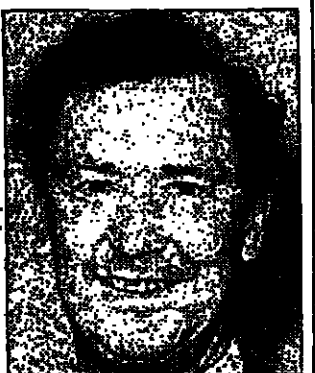
Law ombudsman says main complaint is poor service

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

DELAY, lack of action, not keeping clients informed and other forms of poor service were the most common grievances among nearly 1,000 complaints against solicitors, barristers and licensed conveyancers handled by the legal services ombudsman in his first six months.

Outlining details of his work, Michael Barnes, the ombudsman, said yesterday that the type of legal transaction in which most complainants were involved was buying or selling a house, followed by divorce, property or boundary disputes and probate.

In settling the complaints, Mr Barnes has used his new powers to recommend that solicitors should pay compensation to aggrieved clients. The amounts so far range from £200 to £330 although there is no limit. He has also made recommendations to the



Barnes: used powers to have compensation paid

Solicitors' Complaints' Bureau on the Law Society's deposit interest rules, deduction of costs from clients' money held by a solicitor, and disciplinary action against a solicitor who acted for both sides in a conveyancing transaction.

Of the 980 complaints that came into the ombudsman's office, two-thirds were a backlog inherited from the lay observer, whom the ombudsman replaces. There have been 365 complaints since

January 1. The vast majority relate to solicitors but 3 per cent involve the handling by the Bar Council and the Council for Licensed Conveyancers of complaints against barristers and conveyancers.

By June this year, Mr Barnes had issued reports on 224 individual complaints. He found in favour of the complainant in 15 per cent of the complaints originally made to the lay observer and 20 per cent of new complaints made to the ombudsman.

Tests find dangers in compost shredders

By TIM JONES

HALF the compost shredders examined by *Gardening from Which?* were potentially dangerous, the Consumers' Association magazine says today.

According to *Which?* the shredders were so designed that the user could touch the rotating blades. Researchers also found other safety problems such as lack of guards and long blade stopping times.

The association is to take up shredder safety with the makers and department of trade and industry officials.

The magazine's report on

shredders which cost less than £300 says that the models considered potentially dangerous were the AL-KOH1100 and the AL-KOH1300, three Lescha models, three ZAKs, two Scheppachs, the GWS250 and the Biostar 1800, the Black and Decker GA100. Some have been replaced but may still be available, *Which?* says. Gardeners are advised to use a residual current device, wear gloves and eye and ear protectors, keep children and animals away, and keep hands from inlets.

More horsepower than horseplay for gypsies of '91

The gypsies of today travel stylishly in BMWs and Porsches. Kerry Gill reports on traditions old and new at the annual St Boswells gypsy fair in the Borders

gypsies claim that an ancient charter allows them to take over the green, leased by the duke to the village committee, from July 17 until noon today. Then they must move on.

Trouble these days is rare, confined to the odd alcohol-inspired feud with local youths, but it was not always so. In 1853 "the great riot" took place, a huge fight involving villagers, Irish navvies working on the new railway and the gypsies. A local youth, Willie Lauder,

went to the aid of his father, was bashed on the head and died. Thirty dragoons were dispatched from Edinburgh to catch the culprit, who apparently vanished to the United States. Perhaps scared of blaming either a gypsy or a villager, the troops rode into the navvies' camp and hanged one of them found with bloodstains on his shirt.

Roy Lawrie, chairman of the community council, said that there had been murmurings of discontent among

some local people, although the shopkeepers and publicans were glad of the mid-summer trade. "There is some horseplay and high spirits among a tiny per cent, but generally they are well-behaved now," he said. "I am a traditionalist. My family have lived here for centuries and I don't want to see a tradition die out. There is supposed to be an ancient charter allowing the fair, but no one has ever seen it."

For centuries the gypsies have traded in horses, sheep and cattle, and told fortunes. Only a few horses are sold now, compared with 1,000 a day at the turn of the century, but the gypsies seem keener than ever to enjoy their annual visit, arriving in huge

caravans towed by Mercedes-Benz cars, BMWs and even the odd Porsche. Ettrick and Lauderdale council charges each caravan £5 for parking and water supply. Dues used to be paid to the Duke of Buccleuch, two shillings of "Scotch money" for every horse sold and eight pence for a sheep.

Originally known as "Bosil's Fair", the Earl of Melrose gave permission for it to take place in the kirkyard of the old church of St Bosil, but in 1743 the River Tweed flooded the fair and it was subsequently held on the green. Today the gypsies will travel to Aberdeenshire, leaving St Boswells' green another 12 months to recuperate.

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Kinnock refuses to back down on nuclear arms policy

By PHILIP WEBSTER, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

NEIL Kinnock will head off any attempts to challenge Labour's defence policy by making clear beyond doubt that a Labour government will retain nuclear weapons while other countries possess them.

The Labour leader is refusing to make any concessions to critics of the policy stance outlined last week by Gerald Kaufman, the shadow foreign secretary. He is making plain that he is fully behind Mr Kaufman's statement that Britain would remain a participant in nuclear arms reduction talks "until they are successfully and finally concluded with an agreement by all thermo-nuclear powers completely to eliminate these weapons".

If NEC members challenge Mr Kaufman's stance at next week's monthly meeting, Mr

Kinnock is preparing to make clear that the position outlined by the shadow foreign secretary is fully in line with the policy agreed at the past two party conferences. In the key policy document *Meet the Challenge, Make the Change*, drawn up in 1989 and unanimously agreed by shadow cabinet members, the party promised: "Unlike the Conservatives, we will play an active part in the process of world disarmament. Britain will join the disarmament negotiations with the intention of eliminating Britain's nuclear weapons in concert with the superpowers."

The words "in concert", according to leadership sources, are fully compatible with Mr Kaufman's exposition of policy.

John Prescott, the shadow

transport secretary, is quoted in this week's *Tribune* as saying of Mr Kaufman's article in *The Guardian*: "Everybody knows it is a policy change, but no one is admitting it".

Opposition from party members, especially those with CND links, is expected at this year's Brighton conference. The Labour co-ordinating committee, the main constituency pressure group, is asking members to submit resolutions.

However, last night Labour sources were playing down any suggestions of a revolt by Mr Prescott or any other member of the shadow cabinet. The sources said: "What Gerald said is fully in line with a policy agreed by the shadow cabinet. This year's conference at Brighton will be the last before the general election. The shadow cabinet will be presenting itself as the cabinet-in-waiting, with a unity of purpose across the full spectrum of policy."

"There will be a contrast between the stark division and lack of direction of the Tories and the future Labour government united in policy and ready to hit the ground running from day one. In those circumstances, it would be amazing if there were any revolt."

Mr Kinnock is clearly determined to avoid a repetition of last year's conference when six members of the shadow cabinet voted against him in the national executive over the issue of defence spending. He has made plain to his shadow cabinet that in government collective responsibility would be regarded as "absolute" and it is clear that this year he will come down hard on anyone rocking the boat.

The Labour leader's argument is that the commitment to retain nuclear weapons while other countries have their stockpiles is compatible with Labour's desire, as expressed in the policy documents, to play a full part in the negotiating process.



All steamed up: Sir Teddy Taylor, MP for Southend East, at the wheel of a 1913 Fowler D2 steam traction engine outside the Commons yesterday. The machine, following long-held rights, will be hauling three trailers around the South this summer, but the EC may ban such excursions after 1992. Aided by Sir Teddy, the Society of Independent Roundabout Proprietors is preparing for battle

1992 'puts Britain at risk'

WITHOUT radical policy changes, British regions and firms risk being the casualties of entry into the European single market, Roy Hattersley, Labour's deputy leader, said yesterday (Philip Webster writes).

The European Community as a whole would benefit from the single market, but Britain would be going in at a time

when it was singularly ill equipped to take advantage of the prospects it offered.

In a speech to the London Europe Society, Mr Hattersley said that Britain would go into the wider market "at the depths of a persistent slump", when it was at the bottom of the European growth table and as the only EC country cutting its training and education budgets and regional support.

Britain was also entering without the preparation that was being made by other countries. Other countries were identifying industries

that might face special difficulties after 1992 and helping them to cushion the blow, or identifying industries that would enjoy special opportunities by helping them to prepare for their improved prospects.

Mr Hattersley said: "This government seems to believe that in Europe as in Britain the market alone will provide all the answers. Some of those answers will undoubtedly be a further increase in bankruptcies as British companies are put out of business by European competitors."

Dockers' pay-off figures attacked

By SHEILA GUNN

MINISTERS were censured yesterday by a group of MPs for failing to tell parliament the true costs of abolishing the dock labour scheme.

When the Dock Work Bill was going through the Commons, ministers repeatedly gave estimates of the cost of redundancy and other payments to dockers as about £25 million. They now admit the total cost has risen to £141 million.

Many dockers who took generous compensation were re-employed to do the same or similar work, it emerged yesterday.

The Commons public accounts committee said: "While acknowledging that they clearly faced difficulties in forecasting likely expenditure, we are concerned that they so seriously underestimated the impact of the increased size of redundancy payments and the introduction of compulsory redundancies."

The transport department should have foreseen the widespread changes in the workforce at the docks with the demise of the rigid work practices and manning levels dictated by the 1947 dock labour scheme.

The committee added: "We expect a better performance in future. We do not accept the [transport] department's argument that providing Parliament with a range of costs would have implied more precision than a single figure."

The MPs want the Treasury to make sure that departments admit to doubts about costs when introducing legislation so that Parliament is kept properly informed. When the bill was going through Parliament, MPs and peers did not realise that dockers who took compensation could be re-employed by other employers on the same or similar work.

"We are concerned over the risk that companies could seek to avoid their compensation liabilities by going into liquidation and later re-emerge as new companies to continue operations within the docks."

Dock Labour Compensation Scheme, Commons public accounts committee, thirty-first report (Stationery Office, £7.15).

Minister backs UK veal lobby

The RSPCA campaign to persuade consumers to eat only British-bred veal was endorsed by David Maclean, a junior agriculture minister. But, during questions in the Commons, he pointed out that, although supermarkets and other shops identified the origin of their veal, restaurants and cafeterias did not.

Police dogs

The House of Lords last night accepted a government amendment to the dangerous dogs bill to exempt police or military guard dogs from the penalties provided against the owners or handlers of dogs that cause injuries.

Next week

Both Houses will rise for the summer recess on Thursday and return on October 14.

The main business in the Commons next week will be:

Monday: Motion for the summer recess and consolidated fund bill when various topics can be raised. Tuesday: Ports bill, Lords amendments. Wednesday: Debate on Opposition motion on the economy.

Thursday: Summer recess debates. The main business in the Lords will be:

Monday: Child Support bill, Commons amendments. Tuesday: Criminal justice bill, Commons amendments. Wednesday: Armed Forces bill, remaining stages. Thursday: Debate on Israel's occupation of West Bank and Gaza.

Parliament today

Commons (9.30): Statement on GT conference. Debate on schools. Lords (11): Finance bill, all stages. Debate on BCCI.

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BBC TV News, Channel 4 Daily, ITN News, Radio 1, 2, 4, Capital Radio.



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£10,000+	10.35	10.62	9.85	10.09	-	-
£5,000+	9.55	9.78	9.45	9.67	-	-
£500+	9.15	9.36	9.05	9.25	-	-
Monthly Income Option						
£50,000+	11.10	-	10.20	-	-	-
£25,000+	10.50	-	10.05	-	-	-
£10,000+	10.05	-	9.55	-	-	-
£5,000+	9.30	-	9.20	-	-	-
£500+	8.90	-	8.80	-	-	-
INSTANT XTRA PLUS						
£50,000+	11.25	-	10.50	-	-	-
£25,000+	10.50	-	10.15	-	-	-
£10,000+	10.25	-	9.90	-	-	-
£5,000+	9.45	-	9.20	-	-	-
£2,000+	9.25	-	9.00	-	-	-
£500+	9.10	-	8.85	-	-	-
MAXIM						
£10,000+	8.55	8.89	-	-	-	-
£5,000+	7.30	7.55	-	-	-	-
£2,000+	6.65	6.86	-	-	-	-
£500+	6.05	6.22	-	-	-	-
£50+	4.65	4.75	-	-	-	-
CARD CASH						
£500+	5.55	5.63	5.55	5.63	-	-
£50+	4.55	4.60	5.05	5.11	-	-
PAID-UP SHARE						
£50+	4.40	4.45	4.90	4.96	-	-
DEPOSIT						
£50+	4.20	4.24	4.40	4.45	-	-
CLOSED ISSUES						
Instant Xtra	9.45	-	9.00	-	-	-
£10,000+	9.00	-	8.75	-	-	-
£5,000+	8.70	-	8.50	-	-	-
£2,000+	8.45	-	8.25	-	-	-
£500+	8.15	-	8.05	-	-	-
Capital Xtra	11.30	-	10.65	-	-	-
Monthly Savings (£50+)	5.70	5.78	6.15	6.24	-	-
7 Day Xtra	6.70	6.81	6.90	7.02	-	-
28 Day Xtra	7.00	7.12	7.15	7.28	-	-
Special Investment Accounts 1	7.10	7.23	7.15	7.28	-	-
Special Investment Accounts 2	6.40	6.50	6.65	6.76	-	-
5 Year Term Share	7.10	7.23	7.15	7.28	-	-
Subscription Share (£50+)	5.10	5.17	5.40	5.47	-	-
Harvard Subscription Share (£50+)	5.10	5.17	5.40	5.47	-	-

Trinity Road, Halifax



Halifax Building Society announces new rates for investors and Maxim customers (from 20th July 1991) and for mortgage customers (see below).

INVESTMENTS

POINTS TO NOTE: Interest can be paid gross or net subject to tax status. Gross interest rates do not take account of income tax. Interest will be paid gross if the required registration form has been received. Otherwise it will be paid net allowing for the deduction of income tax at the basic rate (currently 25%) from the gross rate. Copies of the form are available from your Halifax branch or local tax office. Income tax may be reclaimed where the amount of tax deducted exceeds your liability to tax. **GENERAL INFORMATION:** All interest rates quoted are variable; the frequency of interest payments is set out in the terms and conditions of the account. *These rates of interest are payable on investments of individuals who are not ordinarily resident in the UK and in respect of whom the Society has received an appropriate declaration. *Compounded annual rates (C.A.R.) apply when full interest remains in the account. Some classes of investor will receive separate notices which will then replace this notice.

MORTGAGES

With immediate effect for new borrowers and from 1st August 1991 for existing borrowers, Halifax Building Society's variable Mortgage Base Rate will be reduced by 0.5% to 11.95%.

BUDGET PLAN AND GROSS PROFILE

Budget Plan and Gross Profile borrowers may request a revised monthly payment at the new mortgage interest rate applicable to their account. Anyone wishing to take advantage of this adjustment should ask their local branch.

19th July 1991

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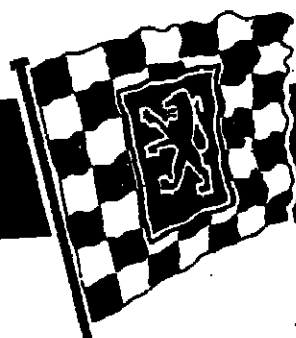
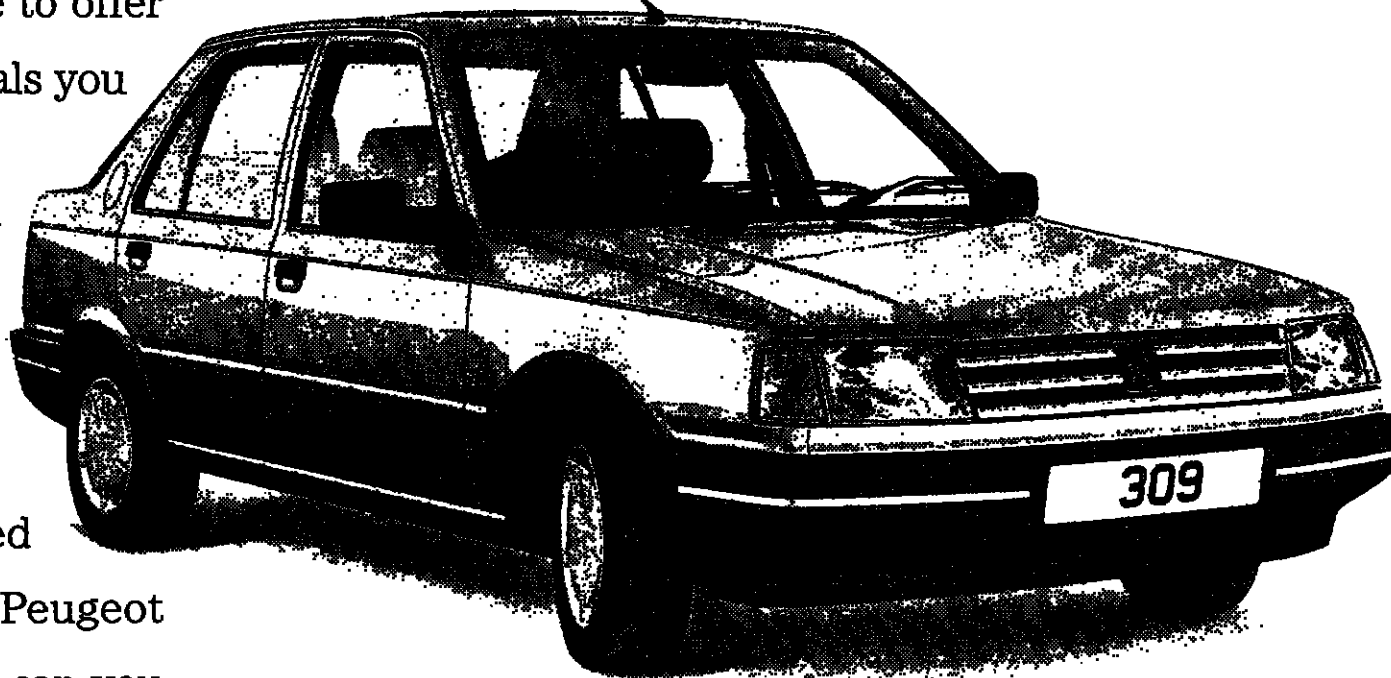
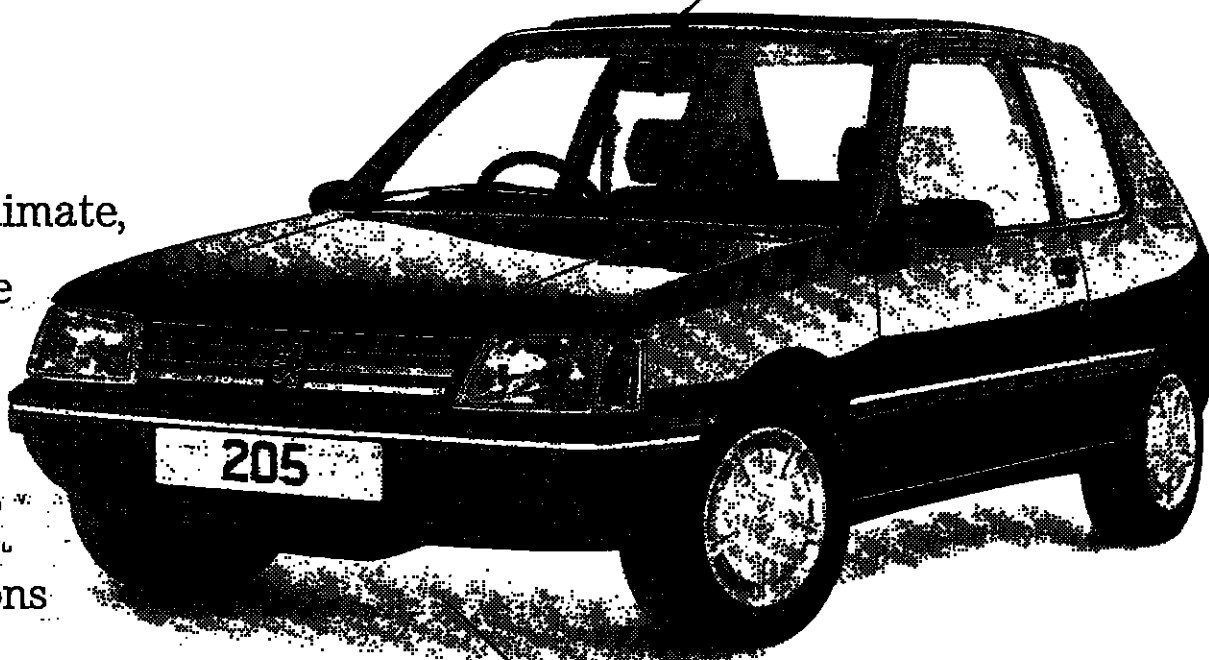
Other competitors, blind to the consumers' needs, have resolutely made no price concessions at all.

Peugeot, however, have always been able to offer you the cars you actually wanted with the deals you really wanted.

So much so that Peugeot have actually increased their share of the market by 15% over the same period last year.

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Hunt for grain of truth in riddle of lost Vietnam war veterans

A SENIOR American official will tour Indochinese capitals over the next three days trying to check the authenticity of a grainy black-and-white photograph purporting to show that three American servicemen shot down over the Vietnam war are still alive in the region.

Officials of both the Vietnamese and Cambodian governments categorically denied holding any Americans yesterday. Reflecting Pentagon scepticism, General John Vessey, the American presidential envoy to Hanoi for prisoners of war missing in action (PoW-MIA) issues, declared that he was not "very excited" by the photograph. But relatives said they remained convinced the men were their family members and had other firm reasons, which they could not disclose, for believing they were alive.

For Johanna Lundy, wife of one of the three and a southern California lawyer, this latest order began with a telephone call from her son, Albro, the weekend before last. He told her that her husband, his father, shot down over Laos on Christmas Eve 1970, was alive in Indochina.

For two decades Mrs Lundy had firmly believed that her husband died in the Vietnam war. She never remarried and raised six children single-handed. Her first reaction was to warn her son off. "She didn't want her baby - me - to get caught up in wild speculation. She didn't want me to have my

A photograph has raised hopes that men missing in action may be alive, say Martin Fletcher in Washington and David Watts in London

heart broken," her son recalled yesterday. "I told her I had a photo. She said: 'Oh, OK. I have to see it.' Two days later Mrs Lundy drove to her son's home in west Los Angeles. She asked for the picture and to be left alone. Three minutes later she called her son into the room and told him: "This is your father."

The black-and-white photograph is blurred and grainy but clearly shows three middle-aged Caucasian men in a wooded area holding a sign on which is written the date, 25-5-1990, and the mysterious letters NNTK and K.B.C.19. The families of Colonel John Leighton

Robertson of the air force, from Seattle, shot down over north Vietnam in 1966, and Lieutenant Larry Stevens of the navy, from California, shot down over Laos in 1969, have claimed the other two men as theirs. The picture has now been published in virtually every American newspaper and has become the talk of a nation where, 16 years after the fall of Saigon, the fate of the 2,200 American servicemen unaccounted for still festers like a canker.

The Bush administration has asked the governments of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia to investigate whether the three flyers

might still be alive, and Kenneth Quinn, deputy assistant secretary of state for East Asian affairs, is flying to the region after business in Peking.

Members of the Senate foreign relations committee led by John Kerry of Massachusetts, himself a Vietnam veteran, have asked the Pentagon for all reports of live sightings - more than 1,300 since 1975.

Carl Ford, deputy assistant secretary of defence, told a House committee this week that the Pentagon first received the photograph from a "confidential informant" in Southeast Asia last September. No one knew where or by whom it was taken and exhaustive tests of its authenticity - it was a "third or fourth generation copy" - had so far proved inconclusive. "I don't know whether it was doctored, fabricated, where it comes from, who produced it, how it got here, not does anyone else," said Senator Kerry.

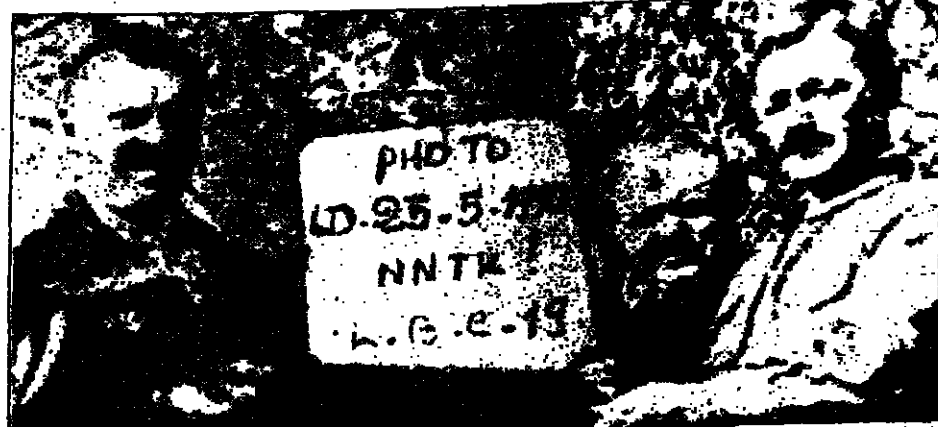
Albro Lundy yesterday claimed to have obtained other solid evidence that his father is alive, and Mr Ford admitted that "the body of information pertaining to this case is quite extensive... There is so much of it that it's hard not to take it seriously." Eugene McDaniel, a former Vietnam PoW who now heads the American Defence Institute, said his group had also received a copy of the photograph from an "American citizen living in Indochina" who believed there were 60 other American

prisoners in the same vicinity.

But within the Pentagon sceptics appear to outnumber believers, with anonymous officials suggesting that the three men looked more like Soviet advisers assigned to Vietnam during the war, and that proffered rewards from relatives for information would have given a powerful incentive to hoaxers. There is no obvious reason why Vietnam, which is seeking better relations with the United States, should still want to hold US servicemen. Phnom Penh's ambassador to Hanoi categorically denied yesterday that Cambodia was holding any Americans.

The administration also has a strong incentive for appearing to treat the photograph with the utmost seriousness. In February Colonel Millard Peck, head of the Pentagon department dealing with MIA affairs, caused serious embarrassment by angrily resigning and claiming that his office was a "black hole" where reports of live sightings sank without trace.

The families' positive identifications could be a case of collective wishful thinking - the Pentagon has begun receiving calls from other MIA families claiming the men in the photograph are theirs - but Mrs Lundy, pointing to her husband's very distinctive features remains unshakable in her conviction that the short, moustachioed man in the centre of the photograph is her husband. The issue is



Film enigma: the photograph, top, claimed to show Colonel Robertson (portrait above left), Major Lundy (above centre), and Lieutenant Stevens (above right)

one of the key reasons that the normalization of relations between the two countries remains a distant prospect. At first sight it appears ridiculous to suggest that PoWs could have been retained at the end of the war and the Vietnamese constantly deny there are any American prisoners held

against their will. The formulation is a deliberate one and leaves open the possibility there may be detainees left in neighbouring Laos or indeed in the highlands of Vietnam which, even today, are a wild area where the government's writ does not necessarily run.

A book recently published in Britain, but not in the United States, details the extensive evidence that Americans are still missing because the United States government suddenly lost interest in their fate. *The Bamboo Cage by Nigel Cawthorne published by Leo Cooper at £18.50

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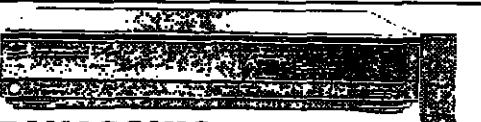
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Latin America hails Castro's return to fold

FROM ALAN TOMLINSON IN GUADALAJARA, MEXICO

COLOMBIA and Chile are to soon open consular and commercial offices in Cuba as the first steps towards resuming diplomatic ties with the communist nation. Paraguay is expected to follow suit.

The timing of the disclosures presented President Castro with an unexpected triumph as he arrived here for a two-day Ibero-American summit at which the question of Cuba's future has been thrust to the top of the agenda.

The news will displease the United States, which had been hoping that Latin American leaders would join it in mak-

Bank bans finance for logging

By ROSEMARY RIGHTER

THE World Bank has announced that it will no longer finance commercial logging in virgin tropical moist forests "under any circumstances". The ban, applying to all lending organisations in the World Bank group, reinforces the expression of concern by the Group of Seven at the London summit about destruction of tropical forests.

Financing of other projects, such as roads, dams and mines, will be subject to rigorous environmental assessments. The new emphasis will be on preserving the tropical rainforests, particularly in countries whose forests are most seriously threatened.

The new policy will be welcomed by environmental groups, which have fiercely criticised previous World Bank programmes to open up the Amazon and create new settlements in tropical rainforest areas, such as Sumatra, in Indonesia.

Britain jailed, page 12



Castro: a sentimental favourite in the region

Minister named in bribe scandal

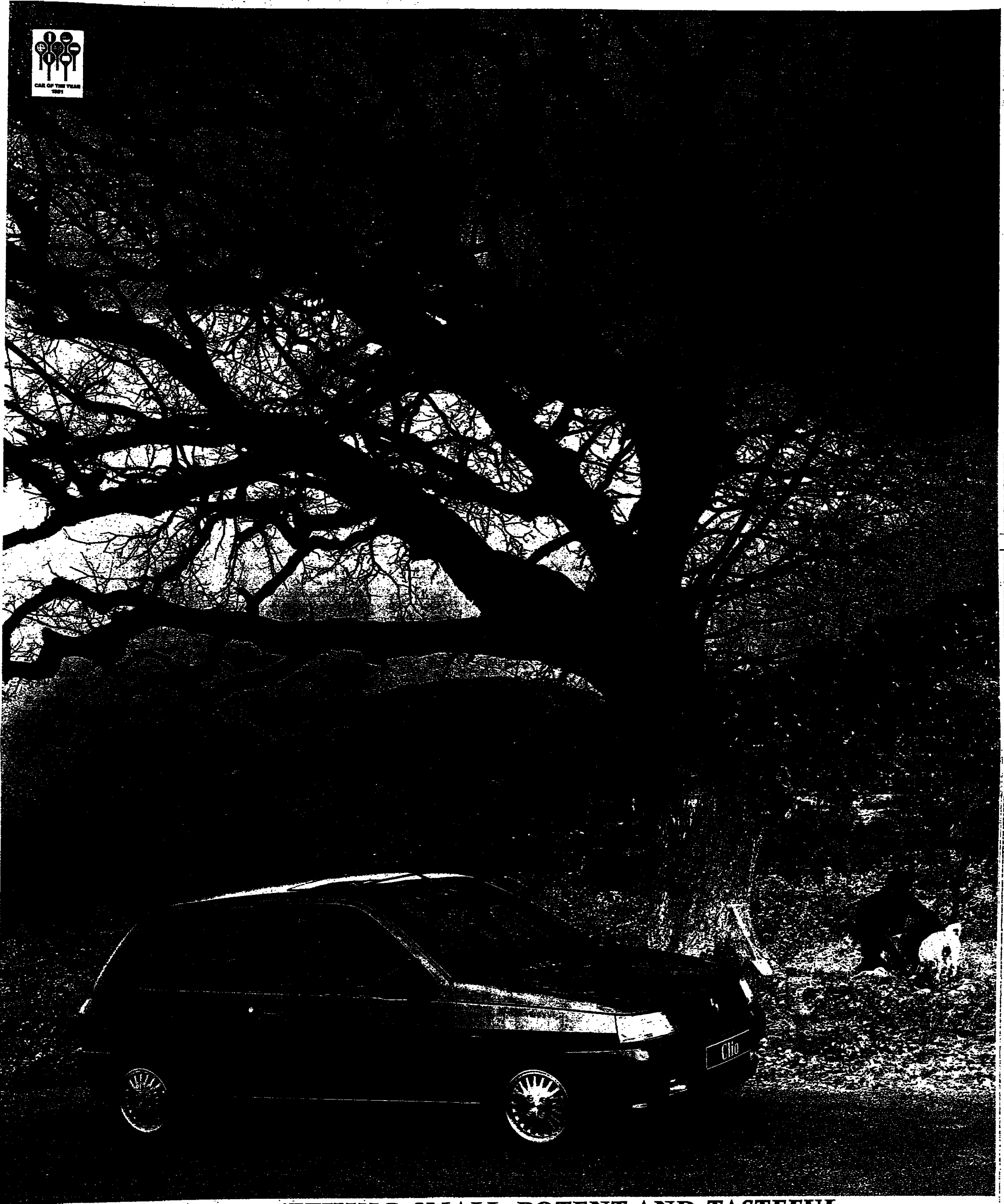
FROM JOHN BEST IN OTTAWA

SIXTEEN Ottawans, including a cabinet minister and the commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, have been ordered to face criminal charges in connection with an alleged bribery scheme.

Permission to proceed with the charges, laid by Glen Kealey, a land developer from Hull, Quebec, near Ottawa, was granted by a magistrate on Wednesday afternoon. Mr Kealey frequently refers to the case as "Canada's Watergate". He has been carrying out a one-man vigil on Parliament Hill for three years protesting against what he alleges to be wholesale corruption in the

Conservative government. Several close associates and aides of Brian Mulroney, the prime minister, are implicated in the case. They include Pierre Cadieux, the minister of fitness and amateur sport, and Roch LaSalle, a former public works minister.

Mr Cadieux is charged with conspiracy to commit fraud. Mr LaSalle faces the same charge as well as one of fraud. The second charge alleges that Mr LaSalle, while minister, tried to exact a \$Can5,000 (£2,700) bribe from Mr Kealey, plus 5 per cent of the contract price, for help in landing a \$Can160 million development contract.



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For them we offer such options as automatic transmission, anti-lock brakes* and the little thing that really turns opinions, power-assisted steering.

Talking of power, the Clio with fuel injection has more

than enough. The 1.4 'Energy' engine for instance delivers 80bhp. Not that this power would ever corrupt. Because a catalytic converter and automatic choke are fitted as standard on all petrol engines.

And everything is wrapped up in something you won't find in other petite cars. An 8-year anti-corrosion warranty.

Clio comes in a wide range of models from the 3-door RL with its all-new 1.2 'Energy' engine (or a refined 1.9 diesel unit) to the RT 1.8 5-door. And they start from just £7,350†

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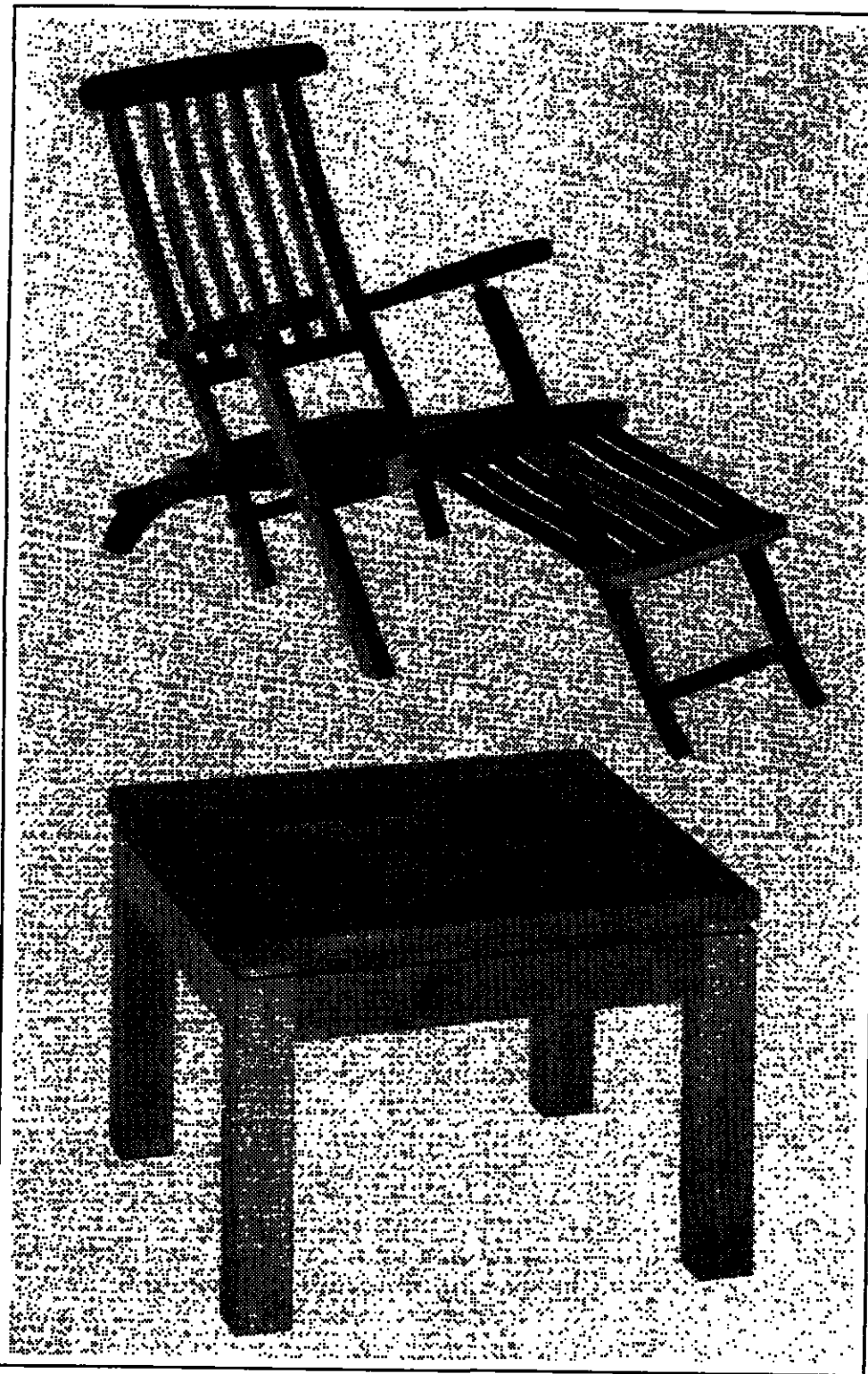
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Mandela points to parting of way with Communists

FROM GAVIN BELL
IN JOHANNESBURG

NELSON Mandela has improved prospects of a political settlement in South Africa by promoting a flexible approach to key issues such as an interim government and constitutional safeguards for racial minorities.

Mr Mandela, the president of the African National Congress, also forecast an eventual end to the organisation's intransigent relationship with the Communist party, which has been a source of controversy within the ANC and the allied black trade union movement. In a local newspaper interview, he eschewed the populist rhetoric of the recent ANC national conference for more moderate and pragmatic sentiments, which indicated a subtle shift by the new leadership to ease negotiations on a new constitution.

While expressing deep disappointment with President de Klerk, particularly for failing to curb political violence in black communities, he said: "I am going out of my way to tell my people publicly that negotiation is the only method, and I am discouraging those people who say we are talking peace while the government is conducting a war against us." Mr Mandela qualified demands for an interim government, which the ANC has insisted is an urgent priority, by saying: "If the mutual confidence is there, it



Mandela: wants reciprocal de Klerk concessions

is not necessary actually to form the interim government before we go on negotiating."

He made no specific reference to another key demand, for an elected constituent assembly, indicating this could be resolved at a preparatory all-party congress. Mr Mandela said the conference should establish constitutional principles, determining how the constitution should be drafted and who should manage the transition period.

The ANC leader also made it clear that he was not prepared to wait for more radical black organisations to join the process under a "patriotic front" umbrella. "Some of them have said they are not interested in negotiations. We are going on with negotiations, so the patriotic

front itself is irrelevant to the speed of negotiations."

The thrust of Mr Mandela's remarks is that he is seeking reciprocal gestures from Mr de Klerk to expedite negotiations, rather than delay them with preconditions. He said the all-party talks were unlikely to begin this year, but he was still discussing the timing with Mr de Klerk, and added: "We are still on good terms, which is promising."

Mr Mandela addressed "mistaken but genuine" white fears about the future by saying: "We are not in favour of black majority rule. We are in favour of majority rule."

He hoped such anxieties would be dispelled by the ANC's commitment to a bill of rights, an independent judiciary, a multiparty system, and regular general elections. "But it may well be that we have to consider very carefully how the principle of one person, one vote, should be applied in the light of our situation, especially in the first few years of a democratic government. It is a question also of doing something to show that the system has an in-built mechanism which makes it impossible for one group to suppress another."

Mr Mandela's remarks appeared to signal a shift in ANC policy, which has consistently viewed constitutional safeguards for racial minorities as a manoeuvre to preserve white privileges. He was equally conciliatory on eco-

nomic policy, admitting that the ANC had placed too much emphasis on nationalisation when it should have been promoting selective state intervention. He acknowledged that taxation was not sufficient to redress imbalances. "You cannot over-tax because that will destroy initiative. People will just pull out and go elsewhere."

Mr Mandela reaffirmed his trust in Joe Slovo, the Communist leader, and said he did not believe Communists in the ANC hierarchy were covertly promoting marxist policies. He predicted, however, that the two organisations would separate in the post-apartheid era. "The South African Communist party has declared that its co-operation with us is only up to the point of the overthrow of the apartheid state. After that, they take their own line, which we will not follow. We won't follow socialism. We have our own programme."

● Cape Town: Juliana Roos, aged eight, braved the stares of her neighbours yesterday as she set off to begin classes at the whites-only Ysterplaat preparatory school that initially turned her away because she was "too dark".

Schalk Walters, the executive director of white education in the Cape province, said in an interview that her admission was delayed to acquire the necessary information for the purpose of enrolment. (Reuters)

Malaysia jails Briton for logging protest

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS
IN KUALA LUMPUR

FIVE environmentalists, including a Briton, who had protested against the logging of Malaysian tropical rainforests were sent to jail yesterday for up to 60 days. The trial of three others, including another Briton, who pleaded innocent to charges of trespassing will start on July 31.

"Foreigners should not come and interfere in our country's affairs," Judge Maria Ahmad said in passing sentence on the five who pleaded guilty. A 50-day term was ordered for Jake James Ian Samuel Bowers, aged 19, from Hastings, East Sussex. Angela Christina Zelter, aged 40, of Cromer, Norfolk, pleaded not guilty, along with Carsten Manfred Huettche, aged 25, from Berlin, and Anja Katarina Gabriele Licht, aged 24, a Swede.

Arriving in a prison van for the trial, the environmentalists shouted: "We had come only to tell the truth about destruction of forests." In their eight-hour protest on July 5, two of the environmentalists had hung from cranes and the others had chained themselves to cranes to prevent the loading of logs for export from Kuala Baram, in Sarawak.

The protest was also made in support of the nomadic Penan tribespeople, who have blocked jungle timber routes, claiming that logging destroys game and their natural homes in the forest.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the prime minister of Malaysia, has denied that his country is allowing logging to be carried out indiscriminately. "Reforestation also is going on," he declared.



Defence case: Angela Zelter, foreground, a Briton, and Anja Licht, from Sweden, arriving at court

Tokyo motorists gear up for £870 parking fines

FROM JOANNA PITMAN IN TOKYO

FOREIGN car manufacturers, attempting to get into Japanese car markets, have often been piqued by rumours that Japan deliberately keeps its car parking spaces too small for luxury foreign models.

This, if it is true, may be a blessing in disguise for drivers of foreign cars, for parking fines in Tokyo have gone up this month to 200,000 yen (about £870). This is the equivalent of more than two weeks' pay for the average Japanese worker. A car left for 12 hours or more in certain high-density traffic areas can land an impecunious owner in jail for three months.

The traffic police's new, tough parking policies are the result of helicopter surveys which revealed that on some days as many as 90 per cent of stationary cars in Tokyo, excluding those caught in the

perpetual traffic jams, were illegally parked.

Wheel-clamping has yet to be introduced in Japan, but the scourge of the Japanese motorist is the "intelligent meter", a fiendish device which can monitor whether a space is full or empty, gives its occupant one hour and not a minute more, and then alerts the police if it is not vacated on time.

Popping out to feed the meter, therefore, serves no purpose, but Tokyo's sharper motorists are learning to pull their cars out of the space and back them straight in again to win another hour's grace. But they can only do this if they are quick enough to prevent another waiting motorist from nosing them out.

Some of Tokyo's more monied shoppers now opt to hire drivers who sit in their

cars while they are busy spending, and pass the time dodging the traffic police. At £10 an hour it is considered a snip compared with the parking fine.

Congestion in the city has reached unmanageable proportions. More than five million cars are registered in Tokyo and millions more make their way in, bumper to bumper, every working day.

Anyone contemplating buying a new car must begin saving early for the parking space too. These can cost as much as £1,000 a month in central residential areas.

Bicycle sales have soared and the more entrepreneurial car salesmen have discovered that fold-up bicycles that slip into the car boot go down well with clients who face a long hike home every time they park their car at night.

UN says Cambodia peace in sight

Peking — Representatives of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council said a lasting peace for Cambodia was in sight, but gave a warning that serious problems were blocking agreement to end the 12-year civil war, particularly disarmament.

America, Britain, China, France, and the Soviet Union, together with Indonesia, ended a two-day meeting on Cambodia in Peking with a statement expressing cautious optimism. The four warring Cambodian factions had made significant progress towards a settlement at meetings in Indonesia and Thailand and at their round of discussions, which ended on Wednesday.

The UN meeting agreed to recommend a mission to Cambodia to study how the UN could monitor a ceasefire that the warring groups declared last month. The mission could leave within weeks, said Richard Solomon, the American assistant secretary of state for East Asia and the Pacific. (Reuters)

Suspect move

Sydney — Australian police, fearing an attempt on the life of a Malaysian charged with murdering Victor Chang, a leading heart surgeon, moved him to Sydney, New South Wales, from the neighbouring state of Victoria. Chiang Seng Liew, aged 48, was refused bail and will appear in court today. (Reuters)

Kashmir threat

Islamabad — Murtaz Hussain Rathore, the ousted prime minister of Pakistani Kashmir, told a press conference after his release from 13 days' detention that he was still the legal state ruler and threatened an armed resistance if Islamabad used force against him. (Reuters)

Defiant Aquino

Manila — President Aquino defended a new treaty extending the United States' military presence in the Philippines for ten more years as the best deal possible. Mrs Aquino faces an uphill struggle in persuading a minimum of 16 of the country's 23 senators to ratify the accord. (Reuters)

Sri Lanka toll

Colombo — The fighting for control of Elephant Pass, linking northern Sri Lanka with the rest of the island, has claimed the lives of 503 Tamil rebels and 53 soldiers, government officials said. General Cyril Ramanasighe, the defence secretary, said 144 soldiers had been injured.

Run on the dollar

Melbourne — Two inmates of an Australian jail organised the laundering of counterfeit American banknotes with a face value of £60 million, according to a confidential report. The inmates, at the minimum-security Morwell River jail, used a telephone in the prison to run the business. (Reuters)

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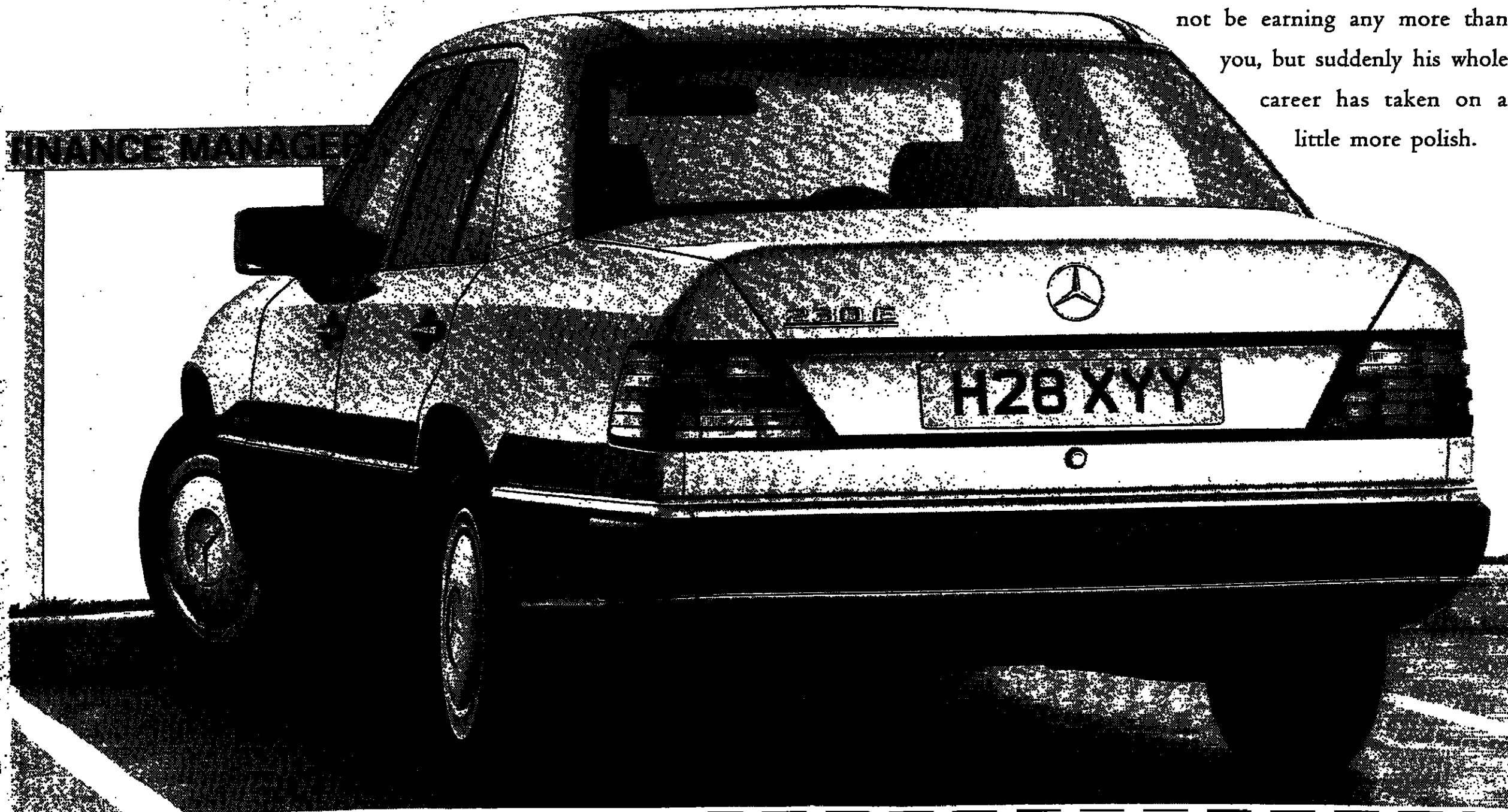
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Communists attack Gorbachev over Western influence

From BRUCE CLARK IN MOSCOW

THE powerful Moscow branch of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has issued a strongly worded warning against the imposition of "Western models" on the country, after hearing its leader censure Mikhail Gorbachev as a liability to the movement.

The broadside from communists in the Soviet capital, who include many of the nation's top bureaucrats, was a political cold shower for the Kremlin leader at a time when he is struggling to convince Western governments of his ability to carry out root-and-branch reform.

It also marked a foreboding of the future Mr Gorbachev will face at a meeting of the CPSU central committee, which is expected to hear renewed calls for his resignation as party leader, scheduled later this month.

In remarks made public yesterday, the head of the party organisation, Yuri Prokofyev, complained to senior Moscow communists that their party was forced to "bear

responsibility for the actions of its leader and his numerous mistakes". He deplored the fact that the CPSU had not been consulted over recent economic measures, such as laws governing land ownership, privatisation and entrepreneurial activity; the party was unfairly blamed for decisions taken "in its name but without its participation".

Speaking as news was announced of the Soviet Union's admission to associate status at the International Monetary Fund, Mr Prokofyev said communists must reject the IMF's "archaic market conceptions", just as they had abandoned the idea of rigid central planning.

Tass said participants at the Moscow CPSU meeting, held on Wednesday but not fully reported until yesterday, backed calls for an emergency congress which would be empowered to change the entire party leadership.

The meeting issued a statement that looked calculated to embarrass Mr Gorbachev in London: it denounces "those

who would like to impose Western institutions and mechanisms on society without proper assessment". The communiqué also censures the current draft of the new union treaty linking the Soviet republics, implying that it would leave small ethnic minorities at the mercy of powerful republican governments.

Every Russian who has ever had contact with the West—in the form of tourists, businessmen or through pirated videos that convey the joys of Western consumerism to the remotest Siberian villages—knows perfectly well the terms on which East and West talk business these days: who proposes and who disposes, who is wheedling and who is wheeled.

But among intellectuals and opinion-makers, who have spent a lifetime reading between lines, the verdict after G7 is already clear enough. Boris Piskunov, a free-market economist and writer, reckons that Mr Gorbachev's efforts must "be a polite but complete refusal" in London. "This is correct policy on the part of the West, because the country's current leadership is not worth giving a kopeck."

One comment to emerge from London suggested that the possibility of large-scale aid has not been ruled out for the future. John Major's remark showed that such help "was not the subject today and lies a little way ahead". That could give Grigori Yavlinsky, co-author of the grand bargain plan for massive Western help to transform the economy, a glimmer of hope that his worst case scenario—taken gestures from the West plus a firm rejection of deeper involvement—has been averted. But for commentators on the arcane political games going on inside the Soviet Union, the questions that remained unanswered after London had less to do with the West's political will, or even with Mr Gorbachev's, and more to do with the Soviet leader's ability to deliver.

As Mr Piskunov sees it, the Soviet leader has lost control of the Russian and Ukrainian economies, leaving the armed forces as the main institution that he does actually direct. "He is just a commander-in-chief with some of the functions of a foreign minister."

While her husband talked economics at Downing Street, Mrs Gorbachev was driven in a black limousine to the home of Sir Yehudi Menuhin yesterday, do they not read Dickens? Russians love Dickens, and their masters under the old regime loved them to love him, encouraging them to believe that England was still exactly as described by the accomplished chronicler of Victorian low life. Raisa disclosed that during a visit to the Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital, an institution of Dickensian vintage, on Wednesday, she had been surprised to find that hardly any of the staff or the patients had ever dipped between the master's covers. "In Russia we continually read Shakespeare, Byron, Keats and we know all those authors," she told Sir Yehudi, who

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Holding operation: John Major moving Raisa Gorbachev into position next to her husband for a group photograph at No. 10 Downing Street yesterday

Dickens finds strong champion in Raisa

By ALAN HAMILTON AND ANDREW PIERCE

RAISA Gorbachev may not have a great deal in common with the Prince of Wales, but both seem to believe that the English are an illiterate and ill-read lot. Why, she asked Sir Yehudi Menuhin yesterday, do they not read Dickens? Russians love Dickens, and their masters under the old regime loved them to love him, encouraging them to believe that England was still exactly as described by the accomplished chronicler of Victorian low life. Raisa disclosed that during a visit to the Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital, an institution of Dickensian vintage, on Wednesday, she had been surprised to find that hardly any of the staff or the patients had ever dipped between the master's covers. "In Russia we continually read Shakespeare, Byron, Keats and we know all those authors," she told Sir Yehudi, who

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US issues terrorist alert as Bush goes to Athens

From MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON AND CHRIS ELIOU IN ATHENS

THE American State Department gave a warning that terrorists might attack American targets in Greece and Turkey during President Bush's four-day visit to the two countries, which began in Athens yesterday.

The department identified the 17 November organisation, based in Greece, and the Turkish Dev Sol group as the biggest threats. Both had been responsible for attacks on American citizens and property in the past, and Mr Bush's arrival was preceded by a number of explosions and protests in Athens this week by left-wing groups opposed to American policy towards Cyprus. Mr Bush is making the first official visit to Greece by an American president since 1959.

On his arrival, he raised hopes in Greece by pledging to make all efforts to resolve, by this year, the long-standing Cyprus problem, which has poisoned relations between Greece and Turkey for nearly two decades.

He told the Greek parliament that "none of us should accept the status quo in Cyprus". He said: "And today I pledge that the US will do whatever it can to help Greece, Turkey and the Cypriots to settle the problem. This will happen this year."

Mr Bush challenged the two quarrelling NATO allies to follow the example set by the Greek statesman, Eleftherios Venizelos, who dominated the Greek political scene from 1910-1933, and Kemal Ataturk, the father of modern Turkey, who signed friendship and commerce agreements more than 60 years ago.

The American president is expected to deliver a similar message when he visits Ankara on Saturday. Political observers said his talks with the Greek leadership are aimed at bridging the gap between Athens and Ankara.

On the turmoil in Yugoslavia, Mr Bush said that Greece as a stable democracy and a European Community member could help other countries in the region. "Your Balkan neighbours, including Yugoslavia, look to you for guidance, help and hope."

Earlier the conservative government of Constantine Mitsotakis, in an effort to avert possibly embarrassing anti-American demonstrations, banned all public rallies and marches to the United States embassy. Six Cypriot women, who defied the ban and staged a sit-down demonstration outside parliament, were arrested. Demonstrations had been planned by Cypriot organisations, left-wing trade unions, students and Turkish and Kurdish refugees.

Papers charged: Four newspapers were charged with violating anti-terrorist laws for publishing terrorist proclamations after bomb protests against the Bush visit. (AP)

Belgian political veteran killed by gunman

Liège — The veteran socialist politician, André Cools, who helped shape Belgium's decentralised state structure, was shot and killed in a car park yesterday by a lone gunman, officials said.

A local politician, who accompanied Mr Cools, was seriously injured in the shooting. The motive was not yet known, said the public prosecutor, Leon Giet. "The tragedy remains inexplicable and all possibilities have to be investigated," he said.

But an ally of Mr Cools, the francophone socialist movement said the killing was likely to have been a political crime. "It is probably politically motivated," said Ernie Ghinne, a member of the European parliament.

Mr Cools, aged 64, was an adviser to King Baudouin, minister of state and mayor of the Liège suburb of Flemalle. He was one of the dominant forces in Belgian politics during the 1960s and 1970s. (AP)

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Site review

Potsdam — A wave of protest has prompted a review of the construction of a supermarket on the site of a former Nazi concentration camp. Officials had previously agreed to allow the supermarket to go ahead about 600 yards from a memorial to women who died at Ravensbrück, in east Germany. (Reuter)

Out of touch

Los Angeles — The Pentagon is searching for a Pegasus rocket stage and seven 49 military communications satellites lost in space after being launched from a Navy B-1 bomber over the Pacific Ocean on Wednesday. The mission was part of the military's effort to develop a more inexpensive satellite. (AP)

Paris debt deal

Tehran — France has agreed to pay Iran \$1 billion (£650 million) in outstanding debt and interest as part of efforts to settle a longstanding financial dispute between the two countries' governments, Alkbar Velayati, the Iranian foreign minister, told Tehran radio. (AP)

Hunt for nazis

Wellington — New Zealand has launched a hunt for Nazis after claims that the thousands of Baltic refugees who settled in the country could include up to 41 war criminals. Paul East, the attorney-general, said preliminary investigations left the distinct possibility that there were Nazi criminals in the country.

Soaring prices

Prague — Prices in Czechoslovakia rose by almost 50 per cent and industrial production dropped by nearly 17 per cent during the first six months of this year, according to an official report. The government lifted most price controls January 1, causing initial price rises of 30 per cent. (AP)

Hide and seek of ask and receive

By MARY DELEVSKY

PROBABLY only two people know exactly what President Gorbachev has been hoping for from his meetings with the Group of Seven — himself and the man who masterminded his approach to the international financial institutions, Yevgeni Primakov. The government and parliamentary officials travelling with the president made clear that they were one category, Mr Primakov was another.

Could it be, wondered one outsider yesterday, that the Soviet leader had hoped to be offered aid and a declaration of Western confidence in the Soviet Union's future without actually asking for them? British and American officials said that nothing had been forthcoming because nothing had been asked for, but it is just possible that Mr Gorbachev had expected his very presence and the force of his argument to prevail, as they do so often in the Soviet Union.

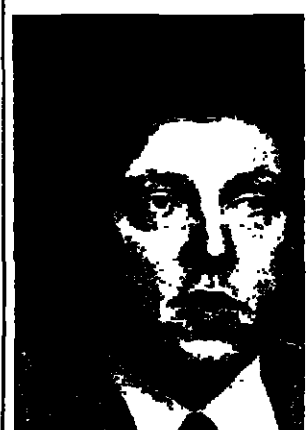
If so, he showed extraordinary naivety and Soviet diplomacy, and Mr Primakov's preparatory work let him down badly. The West simply does not work like that. From the very sketchy information emanating from diverse sources over the past 24 hours, however, this may provide one explanation for what happened.

Another stemmed from Mr Gorbachev's conviction that the West is deliberately blocking Soviet trade through CoCom restrictions on high-technology imports, customs duties and production standards designed to protect its own markets. His assumption — for which a visit to almost

any Soviet shop or factory will provide contrary evidence — is that Soviet goods can compete, so long as they are given equal terms.

Since President Gorbachev's presentation to the G7 leaders, highly placed British sources have offered two illuminating glimpses of the difficulties. Asked whether the Soviet leader understood what a market economy was, they answered that he was making progress in the right direction. In other words, his knowledge was still far from complete. Second, they hinted that Mr Gorbachev regarded full membership of the International Monetary Fund as a one-way street, providing assistance and credit, but requiring nothing in return.

At his press conference, he showed clearly that he found direct IMF involvement in the Soviet economy distasteful and a threat to Soviet sovereignty. Yet this is the other side of the coin of full IMF membership for which Mr Gorbachev has striven, seeking to regard associate membership as second-class. These two insights suggest that Mr Gorbachev may not yet have drawn the one crucial conclusion that is gradually dawning on some Soviet commentators. Why is it, an economic specialist on the Soviet government newspaper, *Izvestiya*, asked recently, that wherever our leaders go and however enthusiastically we talk about economic co-operation, nothing comes of it. "Could it," ventured the commentator the unthinkable, "be something to do with us rather than them?"



Yavlinsky: left with a glimmer of hope

EC's deal with Japan upstages Cresson

From GEORGE BROCK

AN UNPRECEDENTED political and economic co-operation agreement was reached yesterday between Japan and the European Community over the fierce protests of the French government of Edith Cresson, which had tried to hold up the statement as part of its war of words with Japan.

Toshiki Kaifu, the Japanese prime minister, and Ruud Lubbers, the Dutch prime minister, who holds the rotating presidency of the EC, issued a joint declaration of their intention to strengthen trade and political links. Paris, which has taken an increasingly hard line over Europe's worsening trade balance with Japan, had insisted until late yesterday that the declaration include language pushing Japan towards agreements about "balanced" trade.

The key paragraph of the statement says that Japan and the twelve EC governments want "equitable access to their respective markets... on the basis of comparable opportunities". But this formula will make no direct contribution to solving the deadlock between the EC and Tokyo over how many Japanese cars will be sold in the EC after 1992.

Belgrade tells militias to disband

From ANNE MCILVOY IN BELGRADE

YUGOSLAVIA'S collective presidency gathered yesterday for peace talks in Belgrade, only hours before the army's deadline for paramilitary organisations throughout the country to disband or face military intervention.

The ultimatum, which ran out at midnight, ordered all armed units, apart from the federal army and regular peacetime military forces, to demobil

Judicial report contradicts Jerusalem's version of events

Enquiry blames riot police for deaths on Temple Mount

From RICHARD BEESTON IN JERUSALEM

POLICE incompetence and not Palestinian provocation resided in the killing of 17 Arab youths on the Temple Mount last year, according to an Israeli judicial enquiry report yesterday.

The findings, contained in a 4,000-page report delivered by Judge Ezra Kama, contradicted the official account of events into the shooting of Palestinian demonstrators by Israeli border police on October 8. The judge, an investigating magistrate conducting the Israeli version of a coroner's enquiry, ruled that the paramilitary police were guilty of bungling their duties and using excessive force, but he did not recommend that any officer be prosecuted. An official investigation nine months ago concluded that the Palestinian rioters and not the police were to blame.

The incident took place in the Old City of Jerusalem outside the al-Aqsa mosque, the third holiest site in Islam, which is located above the Wailing Wall, Judaism's most sacred place. Palestinian youths gathered near the mosque in a move to protect the site from a march planned by Jewish extremists. The

march never took place, but some Arab youths began stoning Jewish worshippers below.

The outburst began when a tear-gas grenade fell down, began rolling away from the forces, and fell near a group of Muslim women," the report said. It added that Palestinian men then began hurling stones at the police, who responded by opening fire with live rounds, rubber bullets and tear gas.

The Temple Mount riot sparked the worst single incidence of violence since Israel captured the eastern half of Jerusalem in 1967.

Most of the Jewish civilians had already fled the area when the shooting began, and no Israelis were wounded seriously. However, the judge's report said that some police men got carried away and acted even when there was no danger to their lives. In those instances, "the police account of danger was exaggerated and strange".

However, he went on to rule out any possible prosecution of the paramilitary forces. Judge Kama stated: "The behaviour of the police in some cases was improper but I cannot see reason to press charges against the policemen. It is impossible to attribute the death of a certain person to a

certain place and say that a certain policeman is the one who caused the death of that person."

His conclusions appeared to go some way towards appeasing human rights campaigners who accused the government of ordering a whitewash with its own official version of events. However, it also brought relief to the police, who had feared that they might be prosecuted for their actions. A spokeswoman for the police "expressed satisfaction" with the findings.

A brother of a police officer under investigation for indiscriminate shooting was quoted as saying that "justice was made on this day".

For their part, Palestinians have set up a small museum and a shrine on the Temple Mount with photographs of the 17 men who died, in what they insist was a "deliberate" killing.



Holy battleground: Arab youths clashing with Israeli police on the Temple Mount last October

Syria overtakes Israel in league table of US ties

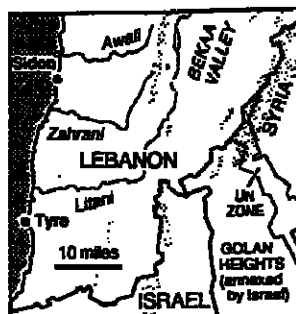
By RICHARD BEESTON

JAMES Baker yesterday became the first American Secretary of State to embark on a Middle East peace mission in the knowledge that he enjoys closer understanding with Syria than the United States' traditional ally, Israel.

When Mr Baker's plane landed at Damascus yesterday for the latest and most decisive round of shuttle diplomacy, he could look forward to smooth talks with his Syrian hosts, who this week accepted the proposed Washington peace initiative, in contrast to the bumpy ride he will receive in Jerusalem on Sunday when he confronts Israel's stubborn leadership, which has rejected Washington's plan.

The White House proposal, set out by President Bush in letters to Middle East leaders last month, had appeared to run into the ground earlier this summer amid Israeli and Syrian objections. But its prospects were revived this week by President Assad's reply.

The Syrian leader made substantial concessions that gave new impetus to Mr Baker's attempt to convene a regional peace conference to discuss the Palestinian question and the Arab-Israeli dis-



both been allocated observer status in the conference. Syria's decision appeared to be part of the growing realisation in Damascus that there is only one superpower remaining in the Middle East and that its decades-old ties with Moscow no longer guarantee it access to modern weaponry, economic assistance or international clout.

In future its regional objectives will only be achieved in close co-operation with Washington and the West, which greatly valued Syria's contribution to the alliance against Iraq, not so much for its military contingent, which never fought, but more for its considerable political influence in the region.

Since the liberation of Kuwait, Syria has profited from its improved standing with America, not only by generous financial donations from Arab Gulf states, but also in receiving Washington's tacit approval for its de facto annexation and pacification of most of Lebanon.

Now President Assad, working closely with President Mubarak of Egypt and King Hussein of Jordan, is expected to be the crucial player in the tortuous path towards negotiations between Israel and the Arab states.

Turks suspicious of allied force

From ANDREW FINKEL IN ISTANBUL

OPPOSITION is growing in Turkey to the basing of a rapid allied force in the southeast of the country to provide a measure of guarantee of protection for Kurds in Iraq. Murtaz Soysal, an international jurist, described the force as similar to that "in the old days when the Soviet Union decided to station a potted hammer inside Syria to protect Turkey's Kurds".

Professor Soysal, who is also one of Turkey's leading columnists, is not alone in suggesting that Ankara may not have control over the residual force, although based in Turkey, and that it might even be used to keep apart Turkish security forces and its own Kurdish rebels.

These concerns are growing despite an announcement on Wednesday by Mesut Yilmaz, the Turkish prime minister, that Turkey would be contributing a 1,000-man company to the allied force. Mr Yilmaz added that the force would not take part in any military operations without the consent of the Turkish chief of staff.



Oak said to have won concessions from Bush

Many, however, believe that the prime minister was forced to accept hosting the force, as it was negotiated and decided by President Ozal. He is reported to have extracted economic concessions in return from the United States, some of which details may be revealed after Mr Bush visits Ankara this weekend.

Opposition politicians are incensed that they were not given an opportunity to debate in parliament the deployment of the force. The troops will continue to operate under the same agreement reached last January when the allies used Incirlik airbase during the offensive against Iraq.

Part of the Turkish nervousness is due to the setting of a precedent - enabling a force in one country to interfere in the affairs of another across a common border. There is also residual suspicion of the old colonial powers which had once tried unsuccessfully to create a Kurdish protectorate out of northern Iraq and southern Turkey.

The anxiety is shared not only by Turkish nationalists but also by the radical pro-Kurdish press which fears that the hammer is being poised against their own aspirations. Turkey's Kurdish activists have at best an ambivalent relationship with the Kurdish front in Iraq.

The most radical of the Turkish Kurdish organisations, the guerrilla group known as the PKK, is now known to have formed a sister party on the Iraqi side of the border called the Free Party of Kurdistan or PAK which is outside the Kurdish front.

To the allied forces, the intricacies of the cross-border politics can only be confusing.

Jihad proposes prisoner swap

From ALI JABER IN BEIRUT

A MUSLIM fundamentalist group said yesterday it would facilitate the release of two Israeli soldiers held here by other Muslim fundamentalists in return for the release by Israel of Arab prisoners. The proposal was the first concrete initiative by the fundamentalists here to break the vicious circle linking the fate of the Israeli prisoners with Arab detainees in Israel and foreign hostages in Lebanon.

A spokesman for the Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine said in a statement that it had agreed with the Lebanese Islamic Resistance group to secure the release of the Israeli soldiers and arrange for representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross to visit them.

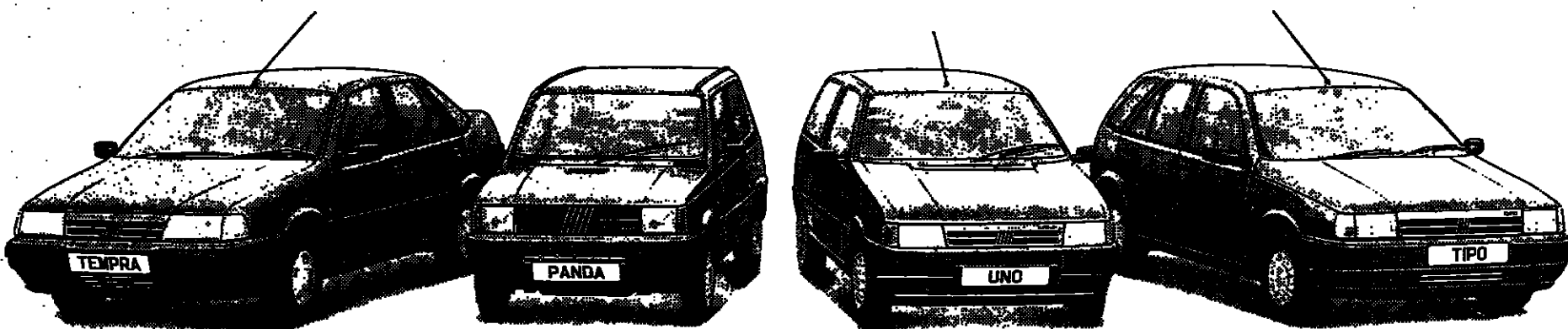
According to Israel, seven of its soldiers have been missing here since 1982. The Lebanese Islamic Resistance group, which is the military arm of the pro-Iranian organisation

Hezbollah, said it holds two of the seven soldiers and is believed to be keeping the remains of two others.

The Jihad said it would act on its proposal if Israel "immediately released four prisoners and pledged to free all Palestinian and Lebanese detainees in its cells".

The statement said: "As soon as the four are released and when Israel pledges to free the rest of the prisoners, the ICRC would then be able to visit the Israeli prisoners in Lebanon." If the deal materialises, it would represent a breakthrough in the plight of 12 Western hostages believed to be held by Hezbollah in Lebanon. Their captors have repeatedly demanded the release of Arab prisoners in Israel in return for the hostages' freedom. Israel maintained its readiness to negotiate the release of the prisoners if Hezbollah agrees to discuss the freedom of its soldiers.

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PRODUCT SHOWN
ACTUAL SIZE

Barbara McDougall, Canada's foreign minister and the only woman at the Group of Seven table, talks to Kate Muir

Sole sister at the summit

This week we saw the re-launch of an institution which was on the verge of extinction — the Wife Of. For the Group of Seven summit, in the post-Thatcher era, brought the Wives Of world leaders to the fore once again. They were defined by their husbands, their designer labels, and their "wireless good works". Happy cameramen trailed the Wives Of, a seamless mass of summer suits and pearls. The women went boating and met Sir Jimmy Saville. The men created the new world economic order.

The men — the finance ministers, the foreign ministers, the heads of state — stood in three schoolboyish rows on day one, and had their group picture taken. Except that three from the end in the second row, one of the foreign ministers was wearing lipstick and earrings. Had a Wife Of escaped the First Ladies posse and slipped in the picture by mistake? Further investigation revealed this was not the case. The lone woman was there in her own right as the foreign minister of Canada. Her name is Barbara McDougall.

In her suite at the top of a London

'Mr Major was warm and friendly, very relaxed and skilful and firm in the chair'

hotel, Ms McDougall decides that the men were "very clubby". But she suspects they watched her as they would any new foreign minister. "It's a small group, and for many of them having a woman in the room is a new experience. But none of them has been remotely patronising, either visibly, or in conversation."

Probably they would not dare. Long training with Mrs Thatcher has taught most foreign ministers that unquestioning obedience and complete agreement are the safest and least painful options when dealing with a senior female politician.

Ms McDougall puts it more subtly. "There was a sense of co-operation, of pushing the agenda forward. That doesn't mean the discussions weren't lively. When you're talking about world leaders, you're talking about people with strong points of view. Canada's been very involved in arms control, and getting a statement on that was a real accomplishment." She crosses her black patent spike-heeled shoes emphatically, and smiles.

As one of the diplomatic staff explains, the minister is no "light-weight schmoozer". She's real neat. Ms McDougall, apart from the looks, has credentials in the Nigel Lawson mould. She worked as a financial journalist, and also had a long career in Canada's financial

industry. "I'm used to this. When I went for a job in finance, just out of school, the first employer said: 'Sorry, we don't take women' and the second employer said: 'Sorry, we've already got one'."

She stood as a member of parliament for Brian Mulroney's Progressive Conservatives in 1984, and immediately made the cabinet as a finance minister, then privatisation minister, then employment and immigration minister, and finally foreign minister this April. Until then, she was also minister responsible for the status of women, and one of six women ministers in a cabinet of 32.

She shakes her head sadly at the lack of skirt in John Major's cabinet. "It's not just your cabinet. You need to step back and nominate and elect women at the bottom. The differences aren't so great as feminists suggest, but women do bring a different point of view to issues, they slice at them differently. If they're 50 per cent of the population, then they're 50 per cent of the talent, and you're losing that whole pool."

Usually, Ms McDougall's line on being a female politician is the I-just-get-on-with-the-job one. But clearly the summit has concentrated her mind on the subject. The publication of the bodily statistics and dress prices of Mila, Wife Of



No Wife Of, but Barbara McDougall finds the Canadian press always prints her age although "they never do that to our trade minister"



Clubby: Ms McDougall takes her place among the G7 participants

Mulroney, in the British press does not meet with her approval. "If they did that to me, I'd croak," she says. "One thing the Canadian press does to me all the time is print my age, but they never do that to our trade minister, who is one week older than I am. I don't know why that is."

The Canadian press use adjectives such as "soignée" in profiles of Ms McDougall, who is in fact 53. She separated from her husband some years ago, and is rather glamorous and fit, the sort of irritating person who arrives after a ten-hour plane ride and wants to play tennis. Her advisers say she is not unfond of a small martini in the evening, prefers her restaurants "slightly bohemian", and disappears into art galleries and

museums at every opportunity. Even the two security men in oddly bulging suits who lurk outside her room with Reader's Digest condensed novels and walkie-talkies attest Ms McDougall's entertainment value as a detainee. "We normally do home security for Douglas Hurd, so this is a welcome relief I can tell you," one confidant.

Ms McDougall is more enthusiastic about Mr Hurd than his ministers, and even more delighted with "Prime Minister Major". "He was really warm and friendly, very relaxed and skilful and firm in the chair," she says ambiguously.

On the subject of Mrs Thatcher, she is positively gushing: "She was at my table at the Palace the other night. She is extraordinary, impres-

sive and... unique, and I mean that in a positive way." There is also stopping her praise. "I was thinking today — we're talking about privatisation in the Soviet Union, and privatisation in Eastern Europe, and she did that. She started that in the universe. That is a real accomplishment. She turned everybody's head around."

You get the impression that Ms McDougall would not mind being in a similar position as leader herself one day. Politics, she says "came with mother's milk in our family". Her great-grandfather was a cabinet minister, her grandfather was an active party member, her mother worked for a senior minister, and said "Don't do it" when her daughter announced her candidacy. Now, after seven years, she is one of Canada's top three Conservative politicians, and a member of the National Unity Committee, which is overseeing the tricky negotiations on the independence of French-speaking Quebec.

All she needs now to qualify for world leader status is a good Wife Of behind her. "On foreign tours I'm very lucky because my long-suffering staff get my clothes pressed and shoes heeled. All the stuff a wife might do. I hate asking them to do that, but this job takes a lot of concentration, and I just don't have time."

Those we have loved to hate

Is the ideological boycott an effective weapon in the campaigners' armoury?



Trouble brewing: coffee and imported veal in the spotlight



Stop drinking Nescafé for the sake of babies in Brazil, the General Synod told us this week. But as far as the Church of England's legislators are concerned, we may continue to enjoy Rowntree's sweets, Findus fish fingers and Crosse & Blackwell soup — and our babies may continue to sup breast milk substitutes.

Yet these are also products of the Nestlé group, which, campaigners claim, promotes bottle feeding in third world countries, inducing mothers to give up breast feeding, and increasing the risk of disease. Nestlé says that it is acting in accordance with a World Health Organisation code of 1981; the campaigners retort that it is breaching rules added to the code in 1986.

This week has also seen a call by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals for a boycott of restaurants and shops selling imported veal, allegedly produced by methods that have been banned as cruel in Britain, adding another cause to a growing index of protest.

Environmental campaigners have learnt that boycotts involve practical and ethical dilemmas, which can rebound on those who use them carelessly.

"We chose not to target baby milk, because it seemed

inappropriate to boycott a product that some child might genuinely need," says Patti Randall, the national co-ordinator of Baby Milk Action, the pressure group that inspired the motion passed by the synod. "Nescafé is Nestlé's highest profile brand, and the company can well afford to lose some of its market share without its affecting jobs."

Ms Randall is not alone in recognising the need to take account of the impact of a boycott on workers. "We use boycotts, but only very selectively, because they can have an effect on innocent third parties, like employees," says Andy Ottaway, a wildlife campaigner for Greenpeace.

Greenpeace is cautious about indirect boycotts — focusing on products which may be unobjectionable in themselves, as a means of influencing manufacturers' policies in other areas. "Our boycotts have always been specific," Mr Ottaway says. "What other people do is up to them. If a multinational corporation misbehaves, an indirect boycott may be the only chance of success."

An indirect boycott campaign in Britain secured a

rather equivocal success last autumn, when the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society persuaded canned fish companies to label their tuna "dolphin friendly", to reassure consumers that the tuna had not been caught with the drift nets in which thousands of dolphins die.

As Greenpeace pointed out at the time, there is no evidence that the yellowfin tuna associated with dolphins has ever been imported into Britain. The campaign did not

save a single dolphin directly. But Mr Ottaway feels that "the evidence of concern must have affected the industry's willingness to talk to campaigners. It also led to further debate about the use of high seas drift nets."

Unspecific targeting is sometimes unavoidable, according to a spokesman for Beauty Without Cruelty, which campaigns against animal-testing in cosmetics. "It is difficult to get large companies to admit exactly what their

practices are, so we cannot tell which products are produced by acceptable methods," she says. "If companies do not respond to our questionnaire about their practices, we do not put them on our list of cruelty-free companies."

Campaigners do not necessarily measure effectiveness only in terms of policies reversed and products withdrawn. "There is little doubt that numerically more boycotts fail than succeed," the magazine *The Ethical Consumer* said last year, adding: "Even an 'unsuccessful' boycott can be a useful campaigning tool."

Even when a company does change, the boycott's influence on the decision is often debatable. When Barclays Bank sold its South African interests in 1986 after the 17-year campaign mounted by the anti-apartheid organisation, it followed a similar flight by American investors. And while the boycott had an effect on Barclays' customers in Britain — its share of the student market fell from 27 per cent to 15 per cent — the bank's decision reflected the damage it was

already suffering in financial circles because of its South African links.

However, when the Avon cosmetics group announced in June 1989 that it was giving up animal-testing, a spokesman admitted that consumer boycotts had influenced the decision. A similar animal testing campaign against Boots, the chemist, has been less successful. The campaign is directed at Boots' Pharmacy, but its targets include drug-testing by Boots' Pharmaceutics. According to Boots, the campaign has had no perceptible effect on any line it sells.

A famous victory in the boycotters' annals was the 1985 action organised by the Farm Labour Organising Committee against Campbell's Soup between 1979 and 1986. The protest was against labour conditions on fruit farms in the Midwest, much of whose produce went to Campbell's processing plants. At first the company insisted that it would be "presumptuous" for it to "inject" itself into labour negotiations between farmers and their employees. After seven years of campaigning, the company signed a new agreement with its suppliers, specifying minimum wage guarantees, medical insurance and union recognition.

GEORGE HILL

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Famous
phoney

MURIEL Gray's now famous Channel 4 box set *Art is Dead... Long Live TV* is not the first instance of a broadcaster parading phoney artists. In the 1950s the BBC's Third Programme broadcast the first British performance of "Piotr Zak's *Mobile for Tape and Percussion*". In fact the "music" was created by two people indiscriminately bashing drums, cymbals and anything else they could find. Regrettably, *The Times* fell for the ruse, reporting that "it was certainly difficult to grasp more than the music's broad outlines, partly because of the high proportion of unpitched sounds, and partly because of their extreme diversity."

Liberated

THE Soviet Union is to mount its first Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, in Moscow and Leningrad from July 24 to August 1, as part of an International Symposium on Gay and Lesbian Issues in the Soviet Union. Organised by Russian and American activists, the festival aims to "provide Soviet lesbians and gays with international support for their courageous struggle to secure full human rights."

Last chance...

BECAUSE of its celebrated holdings of German 20th century painting, the Gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh (031-556 8921) specialises in introducing little-known German names to the UK. Its latest coup is to secure the only British showing of a large scale retrospective devoted to one of the more significant, E.W. Nay. Until Sunday.

ARTS REVIEWS
Theatre and Opera
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GALLERIES: OUTSIDE LONDON

Rich beyond the
need of capital

Publicly owned Impressionist paintings, fine and decorative arts, plus a 'musical' touring show, reviewed by John Russell Taylor

Even the metropolitan-minded can hardly ignore the enormous amount of cultural activity going on outside London. It has, of course, always gone on. Not only have there been important regional schools of art, but many of the most innovative collectors of the last two centuries have been based in the regions. Evidence of that is to be found in two notable exhibitions, *French Impressionism: Treasures from the Midlands* in Birmingham and *Treasures from Lancashire Museums*, at present in Burnley.

Birmingham has long been noted for its superb collection of Pre-Raphaelites — many of them commissioned or bought hot from the easel by local industrialists — and for its flourishing and distinctive school of artist-craftsmen around 1900. But Midlands patrons and collectors did not look only towards home-bred artists. The organisers of the current Impressionist exhibition have been able to call on surprising reserves of French art from Courbet to Maurice Denis apart from the extensive collection at the Barber Institute, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery has wonderful things, as do the German Ryan Collection in nearby Walsall and Leicester Museum and Art Gallery.

Some of this art is famous, at least in reproduction: Birmingham Art Gallery's own Pissarro, *Le Pont Boieldieu à Rouen, soleil couchant*, for instance, or the Barber Institute's Degas, *Jockeys before the Race* and Courbet, *The Sea-arch at Etretat*. Here the latter can be compared with one of Monet's even more famous renderings of the same scene, *Rough Sea, Etretat*, borrowed from Lyons. There is also a canvas version yet, longkind's *The Sea at Etretat*, painted in 1853, 16 years before the Courbet and 30 years before the Monet. These comparisons make clear how far and how fast French landscape painting travelled.

Often, however, the most compelling works on show prove to be the least known. Compared with *La Pensée*, one of Renoir's most famous portraits of pretty young

women, his sparkling little landscape of *St Tropez* will be instantly recognised by few, but here it is easy to identify as one of his most vivid works. Similarly, the famous Degas and two preparatory drawings for the National Gallery's *La La at the Cirque Fernando* can be compared with his earliest dated surviving work, Birmingham Art Gallery's *An Italian Beggar Woman*, painted when he was 23. Though the Old-Masterish brown tonality has little to do with his later brilliance of colour, the acute observation and cunning draughtsmanship are unmistakable.

Lancashire's industrialists also have a notable record of cultural philanthropy, particularly in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. But that is speaking of Lancashire as it was: now that Liverpool and

short flights. What is proposed is that Lancastrians shall become aware of the wonders lurking unknown over the next hill.

The Midlands' Impressionist "treasures" are treasures indeed, but the status of Lancashire museums' "treasures" is more arguable. There are no towering masterpieces among the paintings, but works such as Leighton's *Mother and Child with Cherries* or David Roberts's *The Grand Entrance to Rouen Cathedral* are very acceptable, and one can encounter one of Zoffany's best group portraits, *Charles Towneley and Friends*, fortified as it is at Towneley Hall with local associations, (even though the group regrettably chose to be depicted in the Park Street Gallery, Westminster). One discovers, too, that Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery has an outstanding collection of classic Japanese woodblock prints.

The decorative arts are where Lancashire museums come into their own. Who would have imagined, for instance, that the Hawthorth Art Gallery, Accrington, might possess the most important collection of Tiffany glass anywhere outside the United States? It makes sense that the illuminated Blackburn Psalter of 1250 is still in Blackburn, but it comes as a surprise that the County and Regimental Museum, Preston, has a striking, 14th century, metal *Christ on the Cross*. Royal Lancastrian wares designed by Walter Crane and contemporary glass by Sam Herman bring the story more up to date. If Lancastrians do not feel stirrings of local pride at this show, they do not deserve it.

'Often, the most compelling works on show prove to be the least known'

Manchester have been removed from administrative Lancashire and have assumed their own identities, it is less easy to hit on any distinguished museum or gallery which can still be regarded as properly Lancastrian.

Possibly some sense of this curtailment has inspired most of the remaining Lancashire museums and art galleries, functioning in at least ten towns and cities, to collaborate on a show of their collective treasures. It is circulated, virtually throughout this year, in five different centres within the county. The object, obviously, is to raise local consciousness. Though the distance between, say, Burnley (where the show is now) and Preston is not great as the crow flies, not enough cultured crows have been willing to make these

There is no local connection between the contents of *Sonnets of Colour* and its present venue in Cheltenham — though clearly it is timely that a South Bank touring show about the creation of musical effects in paint should be in Cheltenham during the music festival. The exhibition is very much a case of "Peu de choses, Mais des roses": there are just 21 pictures and four Degas bronzes, but every



Mary Cassatt's *Portrait of a woman in black*, circa 1881, at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery

piece is of outstanding quality.

Nor are the works, all from the same private collection, necessarily well known. *La Danse* is one of the masterpieces of Degas's short-lived Fauve flowering, and was much wanted for the "Fauve Landscape" show at the Royal Academy, but unavailable. There are wonderful early Kandinskys such as the Jugendstil *Crusader* of 1903 and the brilliantly coloured

Murnau Landscape of 1908. Dufy's *The Passers-by* of 1905/6 is one of his finest works, painted well before he dropped into routine, and Van Dongen's *The Hussar*, with its overbearing sexuality, is another masterpiece. Is it really "music in paint"? Perhaps not, but it is difficult to imagine a painting nearer to the uncomfortably intense world of Berg's *Wozzeck* and *Lulu*.

French Impressionist Treasures from the Midlands, Birmingham Museum, Chamberlain Square (021-235 2834). Mon-Sat 9.30-5, Sun 2-5, until August 18. Treasures from Lancashire Museums, Towneley Hall Art Gallery, Burnley (0282-24213). Mon-Fri 10-5, Sun 12-5, until August 11. *Sonnets of Colour*, Cheltenham Art Gallery, Clarence Street, Cheltenham (0242-237431). Mon-Sat 10-5.20, Sun 2-5.20, until August 25.

RECORDS: ROCK

Humour keeps you fresh

FOR a former Los Angeles Lakers cheerleader and hooper for hire, Paula Abdul has not done badly as a singer. Her 1988 debut, *Forever Your Girl*, has sold ten million copies. *Spellbound*, released this week in Britain, has already topped the chart in America and, given the protracted corporate agonising that doubtless went into its making, retains a surprisingly fresh and kooky charm.

An album best appreciated through personal stereo headphones while doing the vacuum-cleaning or frying an egg, *Spellbound* combines a few smirking ballads and goocoo emotions ("Blowing Kisses in the Wind", "Will You Marry Me?") with lots of pneumatic dance beats and sexy frolics. Most of the songs are plainly springboards for the inevitable aerobic-dance video routines, but she does have a perky sense of humour. The best tracks, "U" and "Vibeology", are a tremendous giggle. How many next-great-Brit-

ish-soul-stars have there now been, and what ever happened to Paul Johnson, Jaki Graham, Mica Paris, David Grant and all the others? The latest to have this dubious mantle thrust upon him is Omar, a classically-trained singer, keyboard player and percussionist from Canterbury with a hair-cut like a half-peeled orange.

His debut album, *There's Nothing Like This*, was released a year ago, but here it is again, remixed, remastered and available on CD for the first time, in the wake of his hit single, also called "There's Nothing Like This". Omar's *modus operandi* is to slip plenty of cool, jazzy dissonance into a modern soul mix, giving his music an ultra-sophisticated sheen without affecting its pop radio-friendly

ambience: the Stevie Wonder trick.

Like Wonder, Omar likes to work alone with his synthesizer and percussion machines, virtually creating entire performances, before engaging a guitarist or backing singers to make the final embellishments. This gives an otherwise engaging set of tunes the very precise, slick feel that is the scourge of contemporary dance music.

Even this is preferable to the first of James Brown's post-porridge recordings, *Love Over-Due*. Brown himself deemed only one track from this wretched pot-pourri of Seventies-style supper-club soul worth incorporating in his recent London show, a mildly energetic workout with the self-explanatory title "Dance, Dance, Dance to the Funk". The rest is dreary, dated-sounding kitch — not at all the sort of thing to get you on the good foot.

DAVID SINCLAIR

● Prince will play a show (40,000 crowd limit) at Blenheim Palace, Oxford (0993 811325) on August 31 to tie in with the release of his new album, *Diamonds and Pearls*. His new backing band, The New Power Generation will make their British debut.

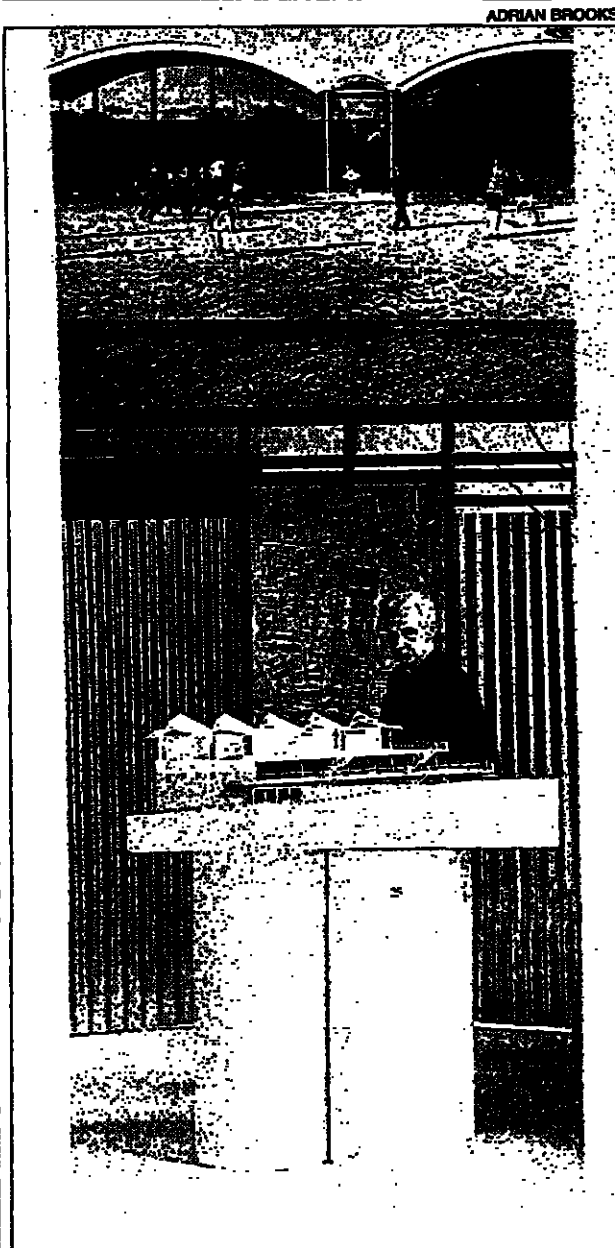
● The House Of Love have announced three gigs, all to take place on August 31. The group will go on stage at 7.30pm at University of London Union, WC1 (071-523 5481); at 10pm at the Town & Country Club, London NW5 (071-284 0303); and at 1am (that is,

actually on September 1) at a third "secret" venue, tickets for which will only be available to 200 people buying a special House Of Love Travel Card, price £20. Postal applications only to DW Tickets, PO Box 1302, London N19 4ST.

● The Pogues headline a festival at Harlow Town Park (0279 448412), Sunday July 21.

● And for anyone still wondering what to do on August 31... the increasingly volatile Guns N' Roses will, of course, be playing Wembley Stadium (081-900 1234).

● The Pogues headline a festival at Harlow Town Park (0279 448412), Sunday July 21. ● Emmylou Harris brings her all-star country band The Nash Ramblers to the Festival Hall, London SE1 (071-528 8800) on September 24.



Cheap and effective: a partial view of the "Schools of Thought" exhibition at the Riba in Portland Place

ARCHITECTURE

County's designers are
in a class of their own

An exhibition of school designs by Hampshire's county architects, assessed by Marcus Binney

Imaginative, unusual small buildings are one of the abiding joys of architecture, and the exhibition "Schools for Thought" presents a selection which could hold its own in any age. For, under Colin Stansfield Smith, the public sector in Hampshire has enjoyed an architectural renaissance. Richard MacCormac, the new president of the Royal Institute of British Architects, likens it "to the sudden appearance of a comet in the sky".

When Stansfield Smith arrived as county architect 17 years ago, Hampshire, like most education authorities, was committed to system building and a kit of parts for schools. Today, each new school is different. The first was Fort Hill, at Basingstoke. "startlingly Japanese in inspiration with strong, overhanging roofs" recalls Stansfield Smith's wife, Angela.

Stansfield Smith then produced a spectacular series of high-tech conservatory structures. His luxuriantly planted galleries at the Farnborough College of Technology are a 20th century version of Paxton's Crystal Palace. Meanwhile, Ian Templeton, his deputy, began to explore the world of Downland architecture, particularly the sweeping roofs of traditional barns and the polygonal plans of early Iron Age huts.

This produced the wonderful twin peaks of Burnham Copse Infant School (a tent-

like structure as dramatic as the new grandstand at Lord's) and Stoke Park Infant School, on a remarkable catenary wheel plan. "Like a swinging skirt," Templeton says.

He explains the centrifugal plans as being developed from the philosophy of Hampshire's education advisor at the time, Jock Killick. "His guiding principle was that all classrooms should be of equal importance: no teacher should feel he has been relegated to the end of a corridor."

Stansfield Smith's approach has been to gather and motivate a talented team, then let them strike out in their own directions. Recently, this has produced a series of exceptionally elegant minimalist schools, beginning with Michael and Patti Hopkins's Fleet Infant School. This has full-height curtain-glass walls, while the underside of the roof is exposed throughout. Parents, without any feeling of embarrassment, can watch classes as they wait to collect their children. More recently, the Queen's Inclosure School

at Cowplain, by David Morris, with a beautiful bowstring truss roof, has carried off numerous awards.

"Schools for Thought" shows how the Riba has a ready-made architecture centre in its Portland Place headquarters. The *mise-en-scène* of the exhibition, though cheap, is highly effective. There is a white vinyl floor, forests of columns (the cardboard shuttering for casting concrete columns), black scaffolding and silver corrugated screens. This is animated by contemporary sculptures commissioned for county buildings from artists such as Elisabeth Frink, David Kemp, Randall Page and Bill Pye.

Any architectural exhibition is transformed by good models. Hampshire has one of Britain's best modelmakers on its staff, Alan Cooper. His vertically hung model of the seahorse-shaped school at Hatch Warren by Joe Collins would look well in any gallery of modern art.

At a time when most local authorities, fearful of overspending, are apologetic about any new building, Hampshire deserves a double commendation: first as a patron of adventurous yet popular new architecture, and second for showing a good design can be produced to a budget.

Schools for Thought, Riba, 66 Portland Place, London W1 (071-580 5533). Mon-Fri 10-5.30, until August 9.

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Worries about bad language obscure the way our culture is degraded by uncontrolled screen violence, writes Janet Daley

Brutalising ourselves to death



Unspeaking: the swearing in Ken Russell's *Whore* deterred British backers, not its violence

with a serious purpose have the right to transgress the bounds of the acceptable. Probably most people would say that it does.

In an examination of the treatment of prostitutes and the male hostility towards women that is acted out against them, some explicitness is necessary if an important point about male attitudes is not to be glossed over. The horror, arguably, is part of

real people engaging in actual acts. To see a thing done is to know (or think that you know) that it can and does happen. To the impressionable, such events become part of the furniture of reality.

The insistence that anything recorded on film or videotape must be treated as a putative work of art has undermined all attempts to talk sense about the propagation of degrading and dangerous material. The anti-censorship lobby continues to demand proof that depicted violence causes crime, on the ground that only an indisputable causal link could justify the curtailing of "freedom of expression."

But the difficulty of establishing criteria for what counts as a work of art means that included in this category of "creative activity" are things which may be nothing more than cynically exploitative pot-boilers, or even actual crimes recorded in porn videos.

A society saturated with images of vividly enacted brutality is *ipso facto* making such acts conceivable, and even encouraging the belief that they are common-

place. This is not a matter for proof; it is self-evident.

The whole vocabulary with which we have attempted to deal with the violence culture may be misconceived: it is not so much an issue of freedom as one of manipulation. To require violence in films to be violent is an absurd evasion. What we must ask is whether pushing back the boundaries of the thinkable and manipulating the expectations of susceptible people is not pernicious in itself. That the influence of this kind of material is incalculable is not grounds for dismissing it. Have a look at the top shelf in your local video shop for a glimpse of what may legally be distributed under the blanket protection of free expression.

A sickening cult of misogynistic brutality, often peddled in the guise of horror movies, is at the centre of a subculture which is festering in corners of our society remote from the experience of the liberal drawing rooms where "freedom" is uncritically defended.

Words may give offence (perhaps most legitimately in the case of blasphemy), but in terms of the moral state of the nation, there is a more urgent war to be waged than that of verbal good taste.

People who protest more about the use of four-letter words in the media than they do about the glorification of sexual violence seem to me to be wasting their moral energy. This is particularly sad now that the permissive consensus of the 1960s is breaking down. Doubts about complete licence are breaking out even in the fastnesses of cosmopolitan liberalism, where total freedom is no longer seen as the antidote to all social ills.

There could not be a better moment for serious discussion of what sort of limits we want. But without an understanding of the difference between prudery and the kind of vigilance that is needed in the face of genuine moral danger, this important battle could still be lost.

This week's report from the Broadcasting Standards Council revealed yet again how much more the British complaining classes are concerned about obscene language than about the depiction of violence, sexual or otherwise. There is something characteristically British about this obsession with words, and more than a little snobbish (swearing being traditionally associated with the lower classes, and dislike of it with respectability). By far the largest number of complaints to

the council come under the priggish heading of "taste and decency".

The absurdity of these priorities reaches some sort of apotheosis with Ken Russell's admission that his new film, *Whore*, failed to get financial backing in Britain not because of its sexually violent content, but because of the torrent of bad language in its dialogue.

As well as a curious moral logic, there is a misunderstanding here about artistic integrity: it can be argued that for a certain kind of naturalistic drama to be credible, some obscene language is unavoidable. The conversation of prostitutes and criminals, or for that matter actors and artists, is not renowned for its resort to euphemism. (Even complainants to the Broadcasting Standards Commission generally accept this.)

Ken Russell's film, described in its own publicity blurb as "an often disturbing look into the dark side of human sexuality", raises the difficult question of how much literal depiction we need in a conscientious work. Does a film

Philip Howard

Foreigners have some funny ideas about English, but then so have the natives

The English definition of hell is a place where the Germans are the police, the Swedes are the comedians, the Italians are the army, the Frenchmen dig the roads, the Belgians are the pop singers, the Spanish run the railways, the Turks cook the food, the Israelis are the diplomats, the Irish are the waiters, the clergy are Welsh, Scots run the bars, Greeks run the government, and the common language is Dutch. It is the language that is the main problem for our nation of non-linguists. It is not just that not all foreigners speak English: when they do they try to get it wrong.

The Danes use the English word *butterfly* to describe a bow tie. It is a memorable image, but it is not British English. It is Danish English. In Denmark a *cottoncane* is the bogus English term for what we call a raincoat or mac. A *sixpence* is what an Englishman would call a cloth cap or flat hat. *Chips* (pronounced "sheeps") are what we call crisps. A *grapefruit* is any soft drink, and a *grapefruit* juice is a grapefruit juice. You cannot tell what to expect when invited to a *dinner* in Copenhagen.

Ahead is full of pitfalls and dangers for those who speak of Essex, Man's plain English. Words that look familiar turn out to be quite different. In France a *librairie* means a bookshop, a *groin* is a snout, *ca resemble au groin d'un cochon*, *marmelade* means a mess of stewed fruit (if you want marmalade, a mistake in France, you should ask for *confiture d'oranges*), *fastidieux* means boring, *un suisse* is a minor official in uniform, such as a porter (originally the Swiss took such jobs), but *un petit suisse* is a make of cheese, not a portier.

The idiomatic traps in American English are worse. The notorious example is to knock up, which in British English can be a whiskey term for to wake in the morning, as done in old-fashioned colleges by scouts at Oxford and bedders at Cambridge, or to hit

backwards and forwards before getting down to serious business at tennis, or (aged) to exhaust (I'm quite knocked up), or to throw together as in cooking (I'll knock up an omelette), or (aged) to earn (He knocks up sixty thousand a year, I'll be bound).

In coarse American slang, to knock up means to make pregnant. Norman Schur, who dances in the no-man's land of misunderstanding between British and American English, says he was surprised when a male British friend told him he had been knocked up early that morning. My ear suggests that to knock up is antiquated in British English, apart from its use in tennis.

We should not be outraged or surprised by foreign uses of English. Language begins to change as soon as its users are separated by a field, let alone by a channel or an ocean. You can draw maps with linguistic contour lines, called isoglosses, showing how dialect and idiom change. What we in the south call a year, when we remember to wear the horrid thing, becomes an under-shirt in parts of Suffolk, a flannel-shirt in Humberside, a singlet in Yorkshire and Lancashire, and a sark, which you can find in *Beowulf*, up in the far north-east.

As soon as the Pilgrim Fathers set sail, their English began to change to deal with their new experiences and objects and plants and animals and institutions. Language changes constantly, because of time as well as geography. Rising at a feather meant to lose one's temper easily for Thomas Jefferson in 1794: "Being so patient of the kicks and scoffs of our enemies, and rising at a feather against our friends." As we go on our foreign travels, we should remember that there is much more to English than we little Englishers dream of, enclosed in our linguistic capsules of time and space.

Islam's immunity from law

A blind eye to the Rushdie incitement allows Muslims to ignore any British laws they may disagree with, argues Conor Cruise O'Brien



In the United Kingdom the only blasphemy that is illegal is blasphemy against Christianity. But the only blasphemy that is dangerous is blasphemy against Islam. Anything perceived by Muslims as blasphemy may be punished ferociously anywhere. On July 3, the Italian translator of *The Satanic Verses*, Ettore Caprioli, was stabbed in Milan. On July 11, Hitoshi Igarashi, the Japanese translator of the same work, was murdered in Tokyo. This week it is reported that two of Britain's leading Muslims have publicly expressed their approval of these transactions, and promise more of the same.

Laïqat Hussain, president of Bradford's Council of Mosques, said: "It is a criminal offence under Islamic law." By "it," he meant having anything to do with *The Satanic Verses*, whether by writing it, publishing it, printing it, distributing it or translating it. He also indicated that he approved of the death penalty in such cases: "Even if it means death."

Another leading Muslim in Britain, Abdul Qudus, a former member of the Council of Mosques, agreed: "The attacks are justified because people translating the book are also insulting the faith."

In every Western country with a Muslim population, there are now two legal codes: the ordinary law of the land, and Islamic law. Where the two codes collide — as over *The Satanic Verses* — it is by Islamic Law that pious Muslims are bound. Laws that conflict with Koran have no validity for them. As a result, several hundred people living in the United Kingdom, and having broken none of its laws, are under a sentence of death, first pronounced by a religious leader in another country, and now reaffirmed by leaders of the Muslim community in Britain itself.

The statements I have quoted clearly constitute incitement to murder, under the laws of the United Kingdom, though not under Islamic law. I don't doubt that the two divines who con-

doned the murderous attacks on the translators believe themselves to be doing their sacred duty in teaching Islamic law in its purity, and without deference to any infidel code which blasphemously contradicts Islam. In terms of the law in which they believe, these divines are no doubt meritorious. But what is their position under the laws of the country in which they happen to be living? Are they to be prosecuted for incitement to murder? Or will the authorities avert their eyes and close their ears?

The latter, I should think is more probable, and I understand why. To prosecute Muslim divines merely (as they would say and believe) for teaching Islamic law would appear, in Muslim eyes, to constitute religious persecution. The divines prosecuted would appear as martyrs, especially if convicted. There would be mass-protests and probably riots in Britain, especially in Bradford. There would also be mass-protests and riot against

Muslims, no laws that conflict with Islamic law can have any validity. The whole of the Western world, including Britain, is the House of War, opposed to the House of Islam and to the Will of God. Muslims resident in territory ruled by the House of War are still part of the House of Islam, bound by its law, and bound to resist any laws of the House of War which clearly and directly contradict Islamic law.

It is understandable that the British authorities should shrink from bringing all this down upon themselves. But certain inconveniences will also follow from such shrinking. If Muslim divines are free to practise incitement to murder (in terms of the law of the land in which they happen to live), then the Muslim community in Britain will have achieved a uniquely privileged position. By an ironic historical inversion, the status of Muslims in Britain will have become analogous to that of Europeans in the heyday of Western imperialism under the capitu-

lations accorded to them by the decadent Ottoman and Chinese Empires. Europeans resident in those empires were recognised as immune from local laws, and governed only by those of their own culture. Muslims in Britain seem well on the way to achieving a corresponding capitulation for themselves.

To refrain from enforcing laws out of fear of the consequences has far-reaching implications. If you begin by ignoring incitement to murder, you may end by ignoring murder itself. Suppose someone does succeed in murdering Salman Rushdie. Would the police be encouraged to be zealous in tracking down suspects for that murder? The assassin would be a hero to the Muslim world, and his trial and conviction would be attended by even more painful consequences than a conviction of the inciting Muslim divines.

Fiat justitia ruat cælum is a brave motto. But I fear that capitulation is a more likely prospect.

...and moreover

CHARLES NEVIN

Perhaps I should have soaked this pan, after all. Particularly stubborn bit of bolognese with a suspicion of onion. Can be a challenge, dried bolognese and onion, but yes, that's got it. What's next? The sieve; tricky things, sieves. Force the little bits left over through it and they're just stuck on the other side; turn it over, try again, and you're back where you started. Now, where's that brush? Actually, I like doing the washing-up. Force? Coercion? Quid pro quo? Do me a favour, John. There's dignity in humble labour. Some get their small satisfactions from the creation of rising soufflés and setting mouselines; not me. Drainage, that's my game. What's *Dindon-neau Farci aux Marrons*, *Mode d'Arlois* compared to six dinner plates, three saucers and a tureen resting on a single supporting egg cup? Exactly. Washing-up is a culinary skill, too. "Culinary: Of or pertaining to a kitchen," that's what it says in the *Shorter Oxford*.

Nor am I alone in my appreciation of the vigorous scour, the liberal application of elbow grease, the achievement of a gleaming, twinkling pan. Let me tell you that only one household in ten in Britain owns a dishwasher, even though they cost no more than the average washing machine. I know this because I read it in one of those newspaper reports you see at this time of year, the ones that tell you loss of memory can be hampering, that Mrs Thatcher had personality traits which contributed to her downfall, that Napoleon snored.

Now this lack of dishwasher market penetration might have something to do with the ecological argument that 55 litres of water goes down the drain every time you use one, but, personally, I doubt it. I think you will find that the manual method remains popular because it gives a chap time to think. (Do women wash-up any more?) Nothing too deep, just steady, calm and therapeutic thinking, the odd question, the odd insight, as you hold the crystal up to the light, checking for smears. Could Anna Karenina solve the Soviet distribution problem? Why does Lord King always look so grumpy? How tall is Helmut Kohl? Why does everybody hate Jeremy Beadle? How many gallons are there in 55 litres?

I range widely, depending on how large a meal it has been. Some weeks ago, for instance, I noticed that a particular caravan had the trade name "Marauder", and I return to this quite often when sorting out five-cousers. Why would anyone call a caravan a "Marauder"? Why would anyone buy a caravan called a "Marauder"? What Viking hearts beat boldly under those woolly cardigans as they advance on the Lake District at a steady 35 mph, pipes clamped?

Washing-up gives time to ponder such things, allows one to contemplate with a Chestertonian wonder the mysteries of existence. Why, I ask myself, searching for that last spoon, would anyone claim they had written a song by Andrew Lloyd Webber? Would it help if Jeremy Beadle joined those other

penseurs, Bernard "Turkey" Matthews, Sir Claus Moser and Miss Sharon Davies in the British Trust, the new charity pledged to enhance the quality of life? No, I conclude, taking my knife to a stubborn bit of dried egg, it probably wouldn't.

The report about dishwashers, from Euromonitor, concluded that native self-reliance and wariness would probably also count against new labour-saving gadgets, which included, *inter alia*, a talking vacuum-cleaner. It doesn't surprise me. We are a reserved race, we British. Besides, what on earth do you talk to a vacuum-cleaner about? How much do you have in common with your vacuum-cleaner? There is only so much you can say about carpets, you know. And would the vacuum cleaner sit around all day talking instead of getting on with it? Will it drink endless cups of tea, milky, two sugars? No, thank you.

No, no thank you too, I promise, to "self-stirring saucepans", "robot lawnmowers" and "intelligent lavatories". Can you imagine the racket? You wouldn't get a word in edgeways. Moreover, there's something curiously threatening about the idea of an intelligent lavatory. Give me a strong, silent lavatory every time.

Back to the draining board. Do you use a tea-towel, or just let everything dry off? I let most of it dry, but I find stainless steel cutlery tends to smear. Do you rinse? You should, you know; it takes a little longer, but it makes all the difference.

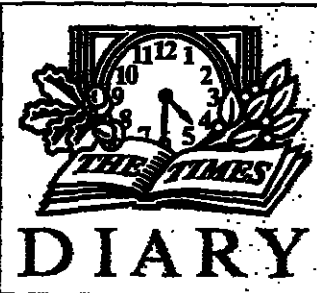
Land we hold in trust

The Bruges Group is about to take its anti-federalist campaign into Eastern Europe with the financial backing of the Duke of Devonshire. The group plans to open offices in Warsaw and Prague in the next few months, with further European outposts to follow. Patrick Robertson, the group's controversial 22-year-old secretary, met the Czechoslovakian economics minister two weeks ago, and flies to Poland on Saturday.

This will nail the lie that we are anti-European. We are setting up in Warsaw and Prague to assist the thought processes of their political parties on the European dimension, says Robertson. The group, like its president Mrs Thatcher, believe that the admission of Eastern European states to the EC can be used to slow down, if not halt, the drift towards federalism.

But the expansion plans will disappoint Tory party managers. They hoped that the group would go into decline after Robertson overstepped the mark when he suggested the price of Mrs Thatcher's resignation was being paid for with the blood of innocent Kurds. The government whips' office has mounted a concerted effort to undermine the organisation, and ministers have been asked not to give the group credibility by accepting invitations to address its meetings.

The Duke of Devonshire, who lives at Chatsworth, has, however, no interest in sparing the government's embarrassment. A former member of the SDP, he now sits on the cross-benches in the Lords. He invited Robertson to his London home on Wednesday and made a donation, sealed over a glass of champagne. It is said that the cheque will cover a "subst-



stantial" portion of the group's running costs. That probably means something in the region of £100,000. "I am very much in sympathy with the views of the Bruges Group. There are grave dangers in any proposed federation of Europe, and with an election pending no politicians of any stature are prepared to commit themselves. It is only the Bruges Group which is prepared to debate it," says the Duke. "My financial support will be ongoing."

As the summit wives performed their ceremonial duties this week at hospitals and tea parties, one of their number was conspicuous by her absence: Danielle Mitterrand. The French first lady has never regarded herself as an appendage of the president. Boycotting the summit altogether, Madame Mitterrand stayed at home, pursuing her own political interests in such causes as Nicaragua and Kurdistan.

Cogs of war let slip

One of the enduring memories of the Gulf war is of John Simpson, the BBC's foreign editor, describing a cruise missile passing just feet away from his Baghdad hotel room window before it was shot down. Now Simpson has donated a small metal cog from the missile to the Imperial War Museum.

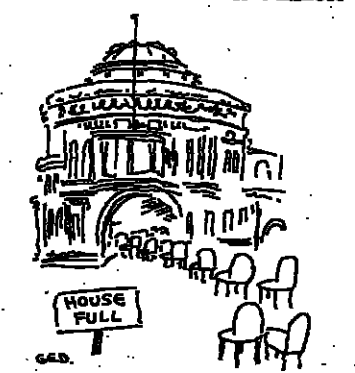
"We had been filming the mis-

sile but were arrested and had our film confiscated by the security forces," says Simpson. "I was wild with fury and had to be restrained by my colleagues." To his astonishment, however, he was then approached by an Iraqi soldier. "He came over and said that as a token of his apology he hoped I would accept a small piece of the missile."

The three-inch fragment will go on display next week alongside other Gulf war icons such as the sandbox used by Peter Snow on BBC 2's *Newsnight*.

Full house empty

Despite scores of would-be concert-goers being turned away at the doors, there will once again be hundreds of empty seats at the Albert Hall during this year's two-month Proms season, which starts tonight. About 1,300 of the 5,500 seats in the house are privately owned, says Albert Deuchar, the hall's chief executive. "They were bought on 999-year leases in 1867," he admits that it is almost



impossible to get seat owners to return their unused tickets as the refund offered is paltry. John Drummond, the controller of Radio 3, has been trying to crack the problem ever since his association with the Proms began,

yet he has effectively admitted defeat. "It is very sad," he says. "I wish people would tell us if they are not using the seats so they could be resold. It upsets the performers to see empty seats" — not to mention those queuing unsuccessfully outside who are told that the hall is full.

While the United Nations team searches for Iraqi nuclear installations, it might also keep an eye out for the Gulf Cup. The soccer trophy, competed for by six Arab nations and last year won by Kuwait, is still missing after being looted during the Iraqi occupation. As a result the next tournament has been postponed for six months while the international soccer authorities plead with Baghdad for its return.

Silent as the crypt

No apologies for a parochial story, Congregation to St Giles's Church, rector of St George's in the East, who today marries divorcee Linda Hirst in his own church. Jim Thompson, the Bishop of Stepney, will not be conducting the ceremony, but "the people's bishop", as he styles himself, will celebrate the eucharist at today's wedding.

Thompson, who is soon to move to Bath and Wells, will remain uncharacteristically silent. The Hawksmoor church, the interior of which was completely destroyed by bombing in the second world war, is engaged in a £4 million appeal in conjunction with the Guildhall School of Music, aiming to turn the crypt into a workshop and rehearsal area. Thompson says: "Don't ask me to play any musical instrument — or even worse, sing. That would do the appeal no good at all." Mr Craig is also happy to have just an official blessing for the wedding. "The bishop has stuck his neck out a bit for me," he admits gratefully.



POLITICS OF ECONOMICS

There was a glint of good news on the economy yesterday. Unemployment rose by only 60,000 in June. Better still, the rate of increase has clearly slowed since March, when monthly job losses reached a record of 111,000. Industrial output, manufacturing production and most other economic indicators are also sending slightly better signals. Such signs may offer small comfort for businessmen or the jobless, but they will please the Treasury.

That is not necessarily good news. The greatest danger at this point in the economic cycle is not that of overstimulating the economy, but of persisting for too long with deflation and thereby needlessly prolonging the slump. This is what the Treasury has been doing since last autumn. The slight improvement in statistical trends will make the mandarins more stubborn in resisting the sharp cuts in interest rates which the economy urgently requires.

The reason why the economy requires much lower interest rates is simple. Even if the decline in output were to end tomorrow, the chance of rapid recovery at present interest rates is virtually nil. Yesterday's European Commission forecast that unemployment will rise to at least three million was consistent with the slight slowdown in the unemployment figures and with the Chancellor's belief in economic recovery before the end of the year. The economic "recovery" the Treasury envisages may not be what the layman understands as a recovery at all.

Rather than seeking a rebound in which production would grow fast enough to generate new jobs and absorb unused industrial capacity, the Treasury would be satisfied with months of "bumping along the bottom", similar to the long period of economic stagnation which followed the 1980-81 slump. That recession formally ended in the first quarter of 1981, but unemployment continued rising for five years after "recovery" had begun.

This is the outlook that most independent economists are now forecasting. The London Business School has projected that Britain's unemployment will rise above 2.7

million next year and remain at that level for the indefinite future. But if Britain is to undo the damage to investment, productivity and employment caused by the unnecessary slump of the past 12 months then a period of much faster growth will be required, to return the economy to a long-run growth trend.

To achieve this in less than the five years it took in the early 1980s, the government should follow the example set by America and cut interest rates well below what may be their long-run average level to give the recovery a kick start. If this means that interest rates may have to be lifted again to prevent inflation from rising, or to defend the pound, then so be it.

If all that is stopping the Chancellor from cutting interest rates is pre-election politics — and the fear that he might have to increase them again early next year — he should remember the last recession. Some are urging that the 1980-82 parallel shows that the electorate does not reject a government because of high unemployment, nor even when it continues to rise, but only when it seems to be rising at an ever faster rate. In that case a high absolute figure would not be fatal to the government's prospects.

But the example of 1980-82 shows nothing of the sort. The monthly increase in unemployment peaked in November 1980. From then on the rate of growth of unemployment declined, just as it may do this year. But the Tories' ratings in the opinion polls continued to fall until 13 months later, in December 1981. It was not until June 1982, after the Falklands war, that the government's popularity recovered to the 40 per cent level needed to win an election. The present cycle may not follow that time-scale, and the Tories are doing better at this stage now than then. But the complacent view that the economic prospects are such as to herald a Tory victory is not supported by recent history. For once the needs of the economy and of electoral politics are in line. Unemployment may yet be a key election issue. Mr Lamont should be reaching for the accelerator.

MASTER IN SCHOOL

Kenneth Clarke, the education secretary, is determined to be master in his own house. This is the blunt message of his announcement yesterday that Lord Griffiths, chairman of the Centre for Policy Studies and former head of the Downing Street policy unit, is to be chairman of the Schools Examination Assessment Council (SEAC), following the resignation of Philip Halsey as chairman and chief executive.

This appointment follows the replacement last week of the chairman of the National Curriculum Council (NCC), Duncan Graham, by another former member of Mrs Thatcher's policy unit, David Pascall. Mr Clarke is also expected to press for someone who shares his own robust views to become the new senior chief inspector at Her Majesty's Inspectorate, when the present incumbent Eric Bolton retires next month.

All this amounts to a revolution in personnel at the Department of Education and Science. Both Lord Griffiths and Mr Pascall are political appointments which bypass the educational establishment. Together with the new head of HMI, they will be expected to adopt a high profile to drive home the government's message: that standards, testing and the three Rs are to be the guiding lights of a national education policy. They will be expected to deliver what customers — the parents — want, in line with the philosophy behind John Major's Citizens' Charter. They will be expected to maintain the rigour of examinations and reduce the national curriculum to bare essentials. They will influence the recruitment of HMI, and try to instil new thinking into the DES and the teaching profession, both as averse to outside pressure as are other professions in the government's sights.

Nobody who knows Mr Clarke will be surprised by his eagerness to show who is boss. Above all, he is determined not to pay a political price for mistakes made by education professionals. The most notable of these is the near-fiasco of the Standard Assessment Tasks for seven-year-olds, the

first results of which are being received by parents now. Like the planned tests for 14-year-olds, the SATs are going back to the drawing board to be tightened up.

So far, so good. But the risk in Mr Clarke's approach is clear. He is seeking to rectify an unbalanced set of relationships, between officials, inspectors, teachers, local authorities and parents. He is doing so in the only way this government knows how, which is to accrete more power to the centre, to himself as minister and thus to his officials. The intention may be benign, but such a politicised education directorate in the hands of a Labour government could as easily be used to impose a reverse philosophy. Labour is already promising to set up a politically-appointed education standards council, to which HMI would be answerable.

These are perhaps risks which every radical minister must take if he is not to be overwhelmed by detail and exhausted by events. Though a majority of schools will continue to be paid for locally, according to a speech by Tim Eggart yesterday, Mr Clarke has inherited Mrs Thatcher's policy of funding numerous institutions, from grant-maintained schools to colleges of further education, directly from the centre. He has not shown why these should be any less constricted by Whitehall than the prisons, hospitals and police forces over which the Treasury exerts so detailed and baleful an oversight. Mr Clarke's belief that Whitehall knows best, in the old ministerialist tradition of his office, is worrying.

Mr Clarke wants parents and schools no longer to deal with their local education authority but, presumably, with the new structure he is putting in place. That means the central institutions which supervise examinations (SEAC), the curriculum (NCC) and standards in classrooms (HMI) must become more responsive to the grass roots. This is drastic and innovative and should not be dismissed out of hand. But it would be reassuring if Mr Clarke could say how the new responsiveness is to emerge.

NO MORE WEEKDAYS

At last is revealed the positive policy on which Labour intends to fight the next general election: the abolition of Friday. It is true that the meeting of the Parliamentary Labour party from which the policy emanated this week proposed it only for the House of Commons.

But this smokescreen, should delude no one. We are here talking socialism by the backdoor. Friday off, once a privilege reserved for the highest earners in the City of London, will soon be a right demanded by everyone. Earnest bishops will argue that if no one works on Friday, there will be jobs for all for the rest of the week. The trade unions will fight for it. The European Community will legislate for it. MPs, having grabbed the day off for themselves, will be in no position to deny it to others.

Once enacted, of course, Friday off will be irreversible. Its popularity will see to that, and if it does not, a "Keep Friday Special" campaign will stand ready to spring into action if ever a future administration dares threaten the new status quo. Not even Mrs Thatcher dared to abolish May Day, another of Labour's lillipops, lest the millions of sons of toil who never marched on Westminster for Arthur Scargill suddenly did so for the sake of this most inconvenient of bank holidays.

So potent an electoral weapon has Labour here stumbled upon that the Tories oppose it at their peril. Instead, in the era of John Major, their right line surely is to outflank Labour. There is, by way of example, Monday. Monday is, as every doctor's waiting room testifies, an awful day. If it is right to abolish Friday, then the Tories will have no difficulty demonstrating that it is right to abolish Monday.

Of course, part of the problem with Monday is that Saturday seems so far away. That particular problem will be reduced once Friday too is a day of leisure. But still, it could seem a long time from Tuesday to Friday, once guests have been invited, tee times reserved, unattached young people who might benefit from a morale-boosting break in the country approached with enticing offers and generally an appropriate series of weekend diversions planned.

So long a deferral of gratification imposes a strain which the elected representatives of the people ignore at their peril. Here is the great opportunity for the Liberal Democrats. Mr Ashdown will at once declare: "A plague on both your houses. Let us have a truly radical policy. Farewell to Tuesday working. And bye bye Thursday. Come to that, Wednesday too." Just in case he does so, the time has surely come to cry "Keep Wednesday Special!"

Calling the tune on party funding

From Sir Robert McCrindle, MP for Brentwood and Ongar (Conservative), and others

Sir, Lord King's Conservative credentials are well known. If, as Chairman of British Airways, he states that as part of the cost-cutting exercises British Airways should cancel contributions to the Conservative party (report, July 17), so be it, but he could save the airline a great deal more money if he stopped gross-subsidising the short-haul loss-making routes by the long-haul profitable ones. These are commercial decisions for the company to take and should not be blamed on the government.

Lord King implies that the government should give preference to the national flag-carrier. It does just that, but since we enjoy a multi-party democracy, the government vigorously supports all our national flag-carriers, not just British Airways. The British government's interpretation therefore of the "national airline" is plural, whereas in most European countries it is singular.

Lord King launched his campaign for the privatisation of British Airways with the catch phrase "I welcome competition". When he has to deal with it, he doesn't seem to like it.

Yours faithfully, ROBERT MCCRINDLE (Chairman, All-Party Aviation Committee), MICHAEL COLVIN (Chairman, Backbench Conservative Aviation Committee), TONY DURANT, PETER EMERY, DUDLEY SMITH, ANTHONY STEEN, NEIL THORNE, GERRARD VAUGHAN, House of Commons, July 17.

From Mr Phillip Oppenheim, MP for Amber Valley (Conservative)

Sir, If Lord King was suffering under the illusion that by contributing to Conservative party funds his company would be rewarded with special favours, I am pleased that he has been disabused of that notion.

By vigorously promoting competition in air services, Malcolm Rifkind, Secretary of State for Transport, has acted in the interests of the consumer, continuing the policy of deregulation — of which the privatisation of British Airways was a part. It can be no coincidence that with the arrival of Virgin Atlantic at Heathrow, competing with BA on the transatlantic routes, fares are starting to fall. It is to be regretted that Lord King, who has always been a great proponent of the free market, apparently draws a line when it comes to his own industry. What comes as no surprise, however, is that his negative attitude to deregulation and increased competition should be so eagerly supported by the Labour transport spokesman, John Prescott.

No amount of sharp suits or tacky red plastic roses can hide how little Labour has really changed from its fundamental principles of championing producer over consumer interests.

Yours faithfully, PHILLIP OPPENHEIM, House of Commons.

From Mr William Rodgers

Sir, It is not clear which is the more reprehensible — to contribute £40,000 to the Conservative party in the hope of favours from the government, or to withdraw financial support in pique, as British Airways appears to have done, when the fruits of such generosity are not forthcoming. But surely the time has come to clean up this unsavoury business by the statutory prohibition of donations to political parties from both industry and the trade unions.

The principle of state funding of political parties was conceded almost 20 years ago when money was made available on a proportional basis to opposition parties in the House of Commons. Everyone knows that this trickles through from Parliament into wider political activities. The annual cost of replacing funding from industry and the cost — perhaps £17 million to £20 million — of replacing a single Tornado aircraft lost during the Gulf war. Isn't this a price worth paying for a much more healthy democracy?

Yours faithfully, WILLIAM RODGERS, 48 Patsburg Road, NW5.

Drinking hours

From the Director of Alcohol Concern

Sir, Your report (July 16) of the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys publication, "Drinking in England and Wales in the late 1980s", points out that the extensions to permitted opening hours have not led to a marked increase in overall alcohol consumption.

This is hardly surprising since surveys carried at the same time (1989) suggested that only a third of licensed premises had taken advantage of the opportunity to open all day.

The report itself states "it may be that in the 175 areas in which interviewing was carried out the net effect on opening hours has been

The Dean of Ely asks us to point out that in his letter published yesterday he mistakenly referred to the North West Gas Board when he should have referred to the North West electricity distribution company).

Campaign for reform of farm policy

From the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

Sir, Your second leader on the economic summit ("...Down to earth", July 18) avers that reform of the common agricultural policy is the key to breaking the impasse in the Uruguay Round of the general agreement on tariffs and trade. The processes are, in fact, not linked like this.

CAP reform is driven by the internal needs of the European Community, Gatt by the need for a new world trade agreement affecting a wide range of goods and services. Britain is promoting a satisfactory conclusion to both, but they are processes with quite different timescales.

By running the two issues together, you fall into the trap of advocating a package of CAP reform proposals that would be extremely damaging to British and European agriculture, without bringing taxpayers the benefit of reducing the CAP budget. Is this what leads you to claim that the principles of Mr MacSharry's package are right?

Are we to assume that it is right in principle to discriminate against the UK because our farmers are efficient? Is it right in principle to discriminate against northern European countries by including their products in the proposals while excluding those of southern member states?

Is it right to discriminate against Europe's ability to compete internationally in agriculture by loading the burden of any Gatt settlement onto its most efficient producers? Is it right to discriminate against taxpayers by making them pay some four billion euros (£2,797 million) for these illusory benefits?

Can one imagine serious newspapers, in, say, France or Germany advocating measures that would have such a damaging effect on their own countrymen? We shall continue to campaign for reform of the CAP, but we are not going to pick the first sour fruit which *The Times* appears so eager to swallow.

Yours faithfully, JOHN GUMMER, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Whitehall Place, SW1, July 18.

Accident compensation

From Mr G. A. Smith

Sir, The letter from Mr David Talboys (July 16) yet again highlights the public misconception relating to "no fault" compensation.

Such a scheme, limited to £2,500, is currently being considered and a report will no doubt be produced in due course. However, Mr Talboys has raised the spectre of many injured parties being able to receive compensation regardless of fault.

If that is taken to its logical conclusion there will be nothing to stop persons receiving compensation in circumstances where they were solely responsible for their injuries, i.e., the negligent driver who skids into a wall, the drunk who drowned in a pool after a party. The list is endless.

Does that list also extend to

Censure of TV sex documentary

From Mr Michael Jones

Sir, You report (July 12) on the adjudication by the Broadcasting Standards Council on the Channel 4 documentary *Sex and the Censors* which was produced and directed by myself and my colleague Nicholas Fraser. I regret that our new censors and moralists are not over-burdened with a sense of natural justice.

The BSC never entered into any discussion with us about the programme and has, it seems, only used as witnesses the most hardened critics of the programme — who were incidentally only a handful of people even though over two million people watched the programme and did not rise up in moral outrage.

In the BSC's courtroom there is no defence lawyer. Nor has the BSC thought it appropriate to furnish us with the results of its adjudication. We had to discover our "sentences" in the newspapers.

The ruling by the BSC is yet another blow against free speech in this country. Having made a documentary series in Eastern Europe before communism fell I have a very vivid sense of the value of free speech.

The BSC has decided in effect that in any TV examination of censorship no sample of film or video material that is the subject of controversy or which one of our self-appointed censorship agencies has banned can be glimpsed, however briefly and whatever the context.

In the case of *Sex and the Censors* the context was an intelligent examination of the evolution of image censorship in Britain which included for example the views of "censors" at the British Board of Film Classification and Professor Bernard Williams who chaired the last Royal Commission on Obscenity and Film Censorship.

Yours faithfully, MICHAEL JONES (Director), Panoptic Productions Ltd., 296a Latimer Road, W10, July 12.

TV's wider world

From Mr Julian Ware

Sir, I was intrigued to read the letter from the Director of the International Broadcasting Trust and others that appeared in *The Times* of July 8. They expressed concern at the lack of proposals for programmes on global environment and Third World issues in the applications for the new Channel 3 licences.

I fully agree with them about the importance of providing a "window on the world" by making high-quality films which "complement news and current affairs coverage". I can only assume, however, that they overlooked Central Television's licence application.

The application clearly states that "this is an area of programming to which Central is passionately committed". Our record over the last ten years is impressive by any standards.

I am happy to reaffirm, as our unopposed licence application makes clear, that Central fully intends to continue this depth of commitment to the environment and Third World issues for the next ten years and beyond.

Yours sincerely, JULIAN WARE (Executive Producer, Documentaries), Central Productions Ltd., 46 Charlotte Street, W1, July 9.

NHS changes

From Dr John Marks

Sir, To say that patients have noticed no difference since the untried, untested and fragmenting National Health Service reforms were imposed just three months ago (leading article, July 5) flies in the face of reality. Try telling that to patients turned away from clinics they have attended for years on the grounds that there is now no contract, and that "extra-contractual referrals" are not available. So much for patient choice.

The British Medical Association is guilty, not of self-interest but of exposing the government's duplicity in health matters. It will be interesting to see if the electorate believes doctors, or politicians and their journalistic sycophants.

Yours faithfully, JOHN MARKS (Chairman, Council of the British Medical Association 1984-90), Brown Gables, Barnet Lane, Elstree, Hertfordshire.

Demise of the pen

From Mr Tim Matthews

Sir, I agree with Mr Macpherson (July 17) on the problem of fountain pens and recycled paper. I also find that many greetings cards today, recycled or not, are "unfriendly" to fountain pens. Messages written fondly with a fountain pen can appear like large spiders to the reader.

Yours faithfully, TIM MATTHEWS, 10 Cedar Terrace, Richmond, Surrey.

From Dr George Scott

Sir, Another trouble with recycled paper is that you never know where it's been.

Yours faithfully, GEORGE SCOTT, Pantiles, Wilderness Road, Chislehurst, Kent.

Letters to the editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — (071 782 5046).

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Conducting *The Dream of Gerontius*: Andrew Davis (7.30pm)

7.30 **The First Night of the Proms**
CHOICE: Television coverage of the Proms begins in traditional style with a live transmission of the opening concert, a performance of Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*, attended by the Prince of Wales. Leading soloists are William White, Florence Quattrone and Keith Lewis and the BBC Symphony Orchestra is conducted by Andrew Davis. Richard Baker, the Dan Mestall of the Proms, is on hand to fill in the background. Two other Proms are being relayed live, on August 3, when the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain gives the Walton Viola Concerto and Shostakovich Symphony No 7, and the last night on September 14. Six recorded concerts under the general title *Concerts at the Proms* will be transmitted on Friday nights, starting a week today. Those who feel that television pictures distract from the music, or prefer a better sound, can tune to Radio 3, which is broadcasting every Prom in stereo
8.40 **Tales from the Gutter**. The final sting in the tail of the most media-saturated war in history comes from those clever yet ardent souls at The Late Show who have taken the maelstrom of the war, Remembrance Day, and John Simpson, Kate Adie, Peter Arnett, Robert Fisk and Alphonse Rocco, among others. The stories vary from the *How I fooled the enemy* type to the *How I fooled the other journalists* genre, and some even make passing reference to the shooting part of the whole shambles. What makes the whole exercise worthwhile are the tales that could not be told at the time, through censorship or actual physical danger, but the journalists themselves do not seem much different from their cool-as-cucumber on-screen personas (revised report)
10.30 **Newswatch** with Jeremy Paxman
11.15 **Weather**
12.00 **Open Golf**. Steve Rider introduces highlights of the day's play from Royal Birkdale
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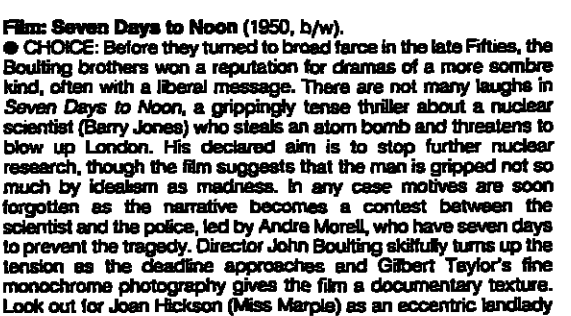
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Comic theatricals: Paul Shane and Sheila White (7.00pm)

7.00 **Very Big Very Soon**
CHOICE: Like Woody Allen in *Broadway Danny Rose*, Harry James (Paul Shane) is a struggling theatrical agent with a raft of unbookable acts. There the resemblance ends. There is no comparison between Allen's nervous humour and the cheerful, extrovert vulgarity of Daniel Peacock's script, which has all the subtlety of a saucy postcard. Peacock wrote the engagingly offbeat *Teenage Health Freak*, which has lately played on Channel 4. Here he returns to a comedy mainstream in which the audience's pleasure derives from having its expectations fulfilled. Tim Winton scores as a drunken stand-up comic and Sheila White enjoys herself as Shane's raucous former wife, forever on the warpath for alimony. Tonight's plot involves the agency's ill-starred efforts to supply an entertainer for a ladies night. (Oracle)
7.30 **Coronation Street**. (Oracle)
8.00 **International Athletics**. Jim Rosenthal presents coverage of the McVie's Challenge from the Meadowbank Stadium, Edinburgh, between Great Britain and USSR
9.00 **Rich Tea & Sympathy**. Hi-and-miss comedy drama from David Nobbs about a career-minded divorcee (Patricia Hodge), a biscuit factory boss (Denis Quilley), and their blossoming romance. With Jean Alexander, Lionel Jeffries, Ray Lomax and Tracie Bennett
10.00 **News** at Ten. Trevor Phillips has Donald and Alister Stewart. (Oracle) Weather 10.35 **LWT News** and weather
10.40 **The London Programme**. Trevor Phillips investigates the rise and fall of business tycoon George Walker. (Postponed from last Friday)
11.10 **The Game**. Danny Baker presents a look at soccer at grass roots level. From the East London Sunday League, division four, match between Young Priests B and Good Shepherd, to the top of the beautiful young lawyer and a man-beast who lives in suburban New York
12.40am **The Young Riders**. Adventures of six Pony Express riders in 1880s Dakota
1.35 **Rescue 911**. William Shatner introduces a documentary series with real-life stories of American emergency services at work
2.35 **News** at Ten. Trevor Phillips has Donald and Alister Stewart. (Oracle) Weather 2.35 **LWT News** and weather
3.05 **Night Beat**. Rock music
4.05 **Soap**. Sometimes hilarious American comedy series featuring the outrageous Tate and Campbell families (r)
4.35 **Beach Volleyball**. Action from the Manhattan Beach open
5.30 **ITN Morning News** with Tim Nelson Ends at 6.00

6.00 **The Channel Four Daily**
9.25 **Clive West of the Divide** (1934, b/w). One of 15 "B" features that John Wayne's Westerns from 1933 and 1935, this revenge western is one of the best. Determined to avenge the murder of his father, Wayne goes undercover to join an outlaw gang and find the killer. With Virginia Brown Fend, George "Gabby" Hayes and Yakima Canutt. Directed by Paul N. Bratton
10.30 **Broken Silence**. The series of Spanish documentary films exploring animal behaviour continues with this look at the care, nourishment and defence of the young (r)
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Laying nuclear siege to London: Barry Jones, right (2.30pm)

2.30 **Film: Seven Days to Noon** (1950, b/w)
CHOICE: Before they turned to broad farce in the late Fifties, the Boulting brothers won a reputation for dramas of a more sombre kind, often with a liberal message. There are not many laughs in *Seven Days to Noon*, a grippingly tense thriller about a nuclear scientist (Barry Jones) who steals an atom bomb and threatens to blow up London. His declared aim is to stop further nuclear research, though the film suggests that the man is gripped not so much by idealism as madness. In any case motives are soon forgotten as the narrative becomes a contest between the scientist and the police, led by André Morell, who have seven days to prevent the tragedy. Director John Boulting skilfully turns up the tension as the deadline approaches and Gilbert Taylor's fine monochrome photography gives the film a documentary texture. Look out for Joan Hickson (Miss Marple) as an eccentric landlady
4.15 **Film: South Sea Specialities** (b/w). An MGM short detailing how accidents are bound to happen if proper safety procedures are ignored
4.30 **Countdown**. Words and numbers game with Richard Whiteley
5.00 **Love Lucy** (b/w). Classic American sitcom starring Lucille Ball
5.30 **Greek Fire**. A fan-past series focusing on the ways that the Ancient Greeks influenced our lives today. This week - tragedy (r). (Teletext)
6.00 **Kate & Allie**. Sitcom about two divorced women sharing a Greenwich Village apartment (r)
6.30 **Tour de France**. Stage 13 - Jace to Val Louron, a distance of 231km including the highest spot of the tour when the cyclists reach 2,115m. The Tour de France is over Col de Tourmalet
7.00 **Channel 4 News** with Jon Snow and Zainab Badawi. Includes an in-depth interview with President Gorbachev. (Teletext) Weather
7.50 **First Reaction**. Labour MP Tony Banks has second thoughts about C4's drama series GBH
8.00 **Brookside**. Realistic Liverpool soap. (Teletext)
8.30 **European Express**. News magazine. Michael Voppe investigates why 90 per cent of applicants to join the French Foreign Legion are from the former communist countries of Eastern Europe; Frank Dubois reports from Madrid on why blind people are talking to the streets; and Isabella Stasi reports on how the Sami people of Lapland are adapting to changing times. (Teletext)
8.55 **International Athletics** continued from ITV
10.00 **Roseanne**. When Darlene (Roseanne Barr) is asked to her first school dance, the whole Cornelia family makes a fuss. (Teletext)
10.30 **The Best of the Paul Hogan Show** (r)
11.00 **Down Under: Bonza**. A comedy from Australia about Ted, his suburban family and their faithful and trustworthy confidante, Bonza the dog
11.30 **Film: Nirvana Street Murder** (1950). Australian black comedy about two brothers, Bonzo (Mark Lee) and his brother, who is a violent, violent and mentally unstable, Luke (Ben Mendelsohn) is relatively normal. Ingredients include blackmail, sleazebagging, robbery and drugs. With Mary Coustas and Tamara Saulwick. Directed by Aleks Vella
12.55am **Tour de France**. A repeat of the programme shown at 6.30. Ends at 1.30

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2.15 **Easy Heat**. It. Gentle exercises for the over-fifties with Pat Rowlandson (r)

6.35-6.55am **Open University** (FM only)
6.55 **Weather**: News Headlines
7.00 **Morning Company**. Mendelsohn (Overture), Calix See and Prosperous Voyage: Bamberg SO under Claus Peter Firth. Recycled (Sonata for strings in B flat; Camerata Bern under Furt)
7.30 **News**
7.35 **Morning Concert** (cont): Elgar (Chanson de matin; Bourne's Suite; Mendelsohn's Suite; Saint-Saëns (Septet in E flat; Maurice André, trumpet; Alain Migault, violin; French String Trio; Jacques Cassegrain, double-bass; Jean-Pierre Collard, piano; Dalka, arr. Grainger (A Dance Rhapsody; Martin Jones and Richard McMahon, piano); Arnold Schoenberg (Phantasie for Piano and Orchestra under Brydon Thomson)
8.30 **News**
8.35 **Composers of the Week**: Pachelbel (Toccata); Mozart (Rapsodie espagnole)
8.55 **Morning Sequence**: Handel (Concerto grosso in F, Op 6 No 9); Stanley (Concerto in G, Op 2 No 3); Linley (Violin Sonata in A); Mozart (Symphony in D, K 81); Arne (The Love Recognition); Alford (Trio in G minor, K 470)
11.35 **BBC Scottish SO** under Jerzy Maksymiuk performs: Tchaikovsky (Suite, The Nutcracker); Rachmaninov (Piano Concerto No 2 in C minor; Elia Visselstein, piano); Stravinsky (Les éolides)
1.00pm **News**
1.05 **Manchester Summer Recital**: Live from Studio 7, Localite Trio performs Concerto (Sonata in A, Op 5 No 3; R. Schumann (Pavane) in G minor; C.F.E. Bach (La folie); Elber (Sonata in E minor, 1682); Corelli (Sonata in D minor, Op 5 No 12, La Folia)
2.00 **Soundings** (r)
3.00 **Youth Orchestra of the World**: Chinese Youth Orchestra performs under Don Juan; Saint-Saëns (Violin Concerto No 3 in B minor; Huang Bin); Chen Yi (Symphony No 1)
4.15 **American Clarinet Music**: James Campbell, clarinet; John York, piano, perform Bernstein (Sonata for Clarinet and Piano (Three Elegies); Copland (Sonata)
5.00 **Musically for Pleasure**, with Jeremy Beadle
6.30 **8th Live**: The fifth of six programmes in which the late Charles Fox traces the career of the 20th-century Charlie Parker (r)
7.00 **News**
7.05 **Wise**: Goethe's Fetter Hall: A monologue by Christine Brookner. While her husband is away, Christine Van Goethe (Christine Brookner) is a former working girl from Thüringen, visits the snobbish Charles Fox (John York) and tells him of her life while she sits alone in the drawing room
7.30 **Proms 1991** - The First Night: Live from the Albert Hall, London, in the presence of the Prince of Wales. BBC Singers; BBC Symphony Chorus under Stephen Jackson; London Philharmonic Choir; BBC Symphony Orchestra under Andrew Davis perform Elgar (The Dream of Gerontius); Part 1, 8.10 **A Night at the Proms**: Elgar (The Dream of Gerontius) and the relationship between them, 8.30 Part 2
8.40 **In Search of Alec Wilder**
CHOICE: Part one of Robert Schostakovich's two-part tribute to the American composer who crossed and re-crossed the boundary between popular and classical music and left a body of marvellous work in both camps, contains a little that is familiar (Shtat singing "I'll Be Around"). A lot is unknown, but would be if there were any justice in this hard-nosed world of commercial music, such as the inebriated and "Did You Ever Close Your Eyes" (sung by the Ever Close Choir), a tender air for oboe and orchestra (conducted by Shtat), and a playful sonata for all - strings - tube and piano
10.25 **Violin and Piano**: Pierre Amoyal and Jean-Philippe Collard perform Brahms (Sonata No 1 in G, Op 78; Schumann (Phantasy, Op 47; Faust (Sonata No 1 in A, Op 13)
11.30 **News**
11.35 **12.55** **Composers of the Week**: Beethoven (r)

6.35-6.55am **Open University** (FM only)
6.55 **Weather**: News Headlines
7.00 **Morning Company**. Mendelsohn (Overture), Calix See and Prosperous Voyage: Bamberg SO under Claus Peter Firth. Recycled (Sonata for strings in B flat; Camerata Bern under Furt)
7.30 **News**
7.35 **Morning Concert** (cont): Elgar (Chanson de matin; Bourne's Suite; Mendelsohn's Suite; Saint-Saëns (Septet in E flat; Maurice André, trumpet; Alain Migault, violin; French String Trio; Jacques Cassegrain, double-bass; Jean-Pierre Collard, piano; Dalka, arr. Grainger (A Dance Rhapsody; Martin Jones and Richard McMahon, piano); Arnold Schoenberg (Phantasie for Piano and Orchestra under Brydon Thomson)
8.30 **News**
8.35 **Composers of the Week**: Pachelbel (Toccata); Mozart (Rapsodie espagnole)
8.55 **Morning Sequence**: Handel (Concerto grosso in F, Op 6 No 9); Stanley (Concerto in G, Op 2 No 3); Linley (Violin Sonata in A); Mozart (Symphony in D, K 81); Arne (The Love Recognition); Alford (Trio in G minor, K 470)
11.35 **BBC Scottish SO** under Jerzy Maksymiuk performs: Tchaikovsky (Suite, The Nutcracker); Rachmaninov (Piano Concerto No 2 in C minor; Elia Visselstein, piano); Stravinsky (Les éolides)
1.00pm **News**
1.05 **Manchester Summer Recital**: Live from Studio 7, Localite Trio performs Concerto (Sonata in A, Op 5 No 3; R. Schumann (Pavane) in G minor; C.F.E. Bach (La folie); Elber (Sonata in E minor, 1682); Corelli (Sonata in D minor, Op 5 No 12, La Folia)
2.00 **Soundings** (r)
3.00 **Youth Orchestra of the World**: Chinese Youth Orchestra performs under Don Juan; Saint-Saëns (Violin Concerto No 3 in B minor; Huang Bin); Chen Yi (Symphony No 1)
4.15 **American Clarinet Music**: James Campbell, clarinet; John York, piano, perform Bernstein (Sonata for Clarinet and Piano (Three Elegies); Copland (Sonata)
5.00 **Musically for Pleasure**, with Jeremy Beadle
6.30 **8th Live**: The fifth of six programmes in which the late Charles Fox traces the career of the 20th-century Charlie Parker (r)
7.00 **News**
7.05 **Wise**: Goethe's Fetter Hall: A monologue by Christine Brookner. While her husband is away, Christine Van Goethe (Christine Brookner) is a former working girl from Thüringen, visits the snobbish Charles Fox (John York) and tells him of her life while she sits alone in the drawing room
7.30 **Proms 1991** - The First Night: Live from the Albert Hall, London, in the presence of the Prince of Wales. BBC Singers; BBC Symphony Chorus under Stephen Jackson; London Philharmonic Choir; BBC Symphony Orchestra under Andrew Davis perform Elgar (The Dream of Gerontius); Part 1, 8.10 **A Night at the Proms**: Elgar (The Dream of Gerontius) and the relationship between them, 8.30 Part 2
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11.30 **News**
11.35 **12.55** **Composers of the Week**: Beethoven (r)

8.00 **TV-am**
8.25 **All Cried Up**. Game show 9.55 **Thames News** and weather
10.00 **Film: The Best of Walt Disney's True-Life Adventures** (1975). First of a two-part compilation of highlights from Walt Disney's nature films. (Part two next Monday)
10.50 **ITN News** headlines 10.55 **Good Morning, Miss Bliss**. Hayley Mills stars in the American schoolroom comedy-drama series 11.25 **Cat Tales** 11.55 **Thames News** headlines
12.00 **Disney Cartoon** featuring Pluto 12.10 **Rainbow** (r)
12.30 **News** with John Suckell. Weather 1.10 **Thames News** and weather
1.20 **Home and Away**. (Oracle) 1.50 **A Country Practice**
2.20 **Divorcing Daddy**. Last in the series examining how divorce affects fathers and children 2.50 **Crazy Comparisons**. Chris Tarrant hosts the celebrity guessing game with guests Gabrielle Drake, Gareth Jones, Steve Jones and Sylvester McCoy, plus team leaders Paula Wilcox and Simon Williams
3.15 **ITN News** headlines 3.20 **Thames News** headlines 3.25 **The Young Doctors**
3.55 **Notre Dame**. Cartoon (r) 4.10 **Rod 'n' Ernie**. Rod Hull with his frantic elephant friend 4.15 **The Magic Garden**. Animated sword and sorcery drama series 4.40 **Go Getters**. Dave Lee Travis sends three celebrity teams off around the countryside to complete a series of bizarre tasks. Today's teams include Craig Charles, Andy Crane, Sonia, Janice Long and Keith Chegwin
5.10 **Home and Away**. (Oracle) 5.40 **News** with Carol Barnes. (Oracle) Weather
6.00 **Six O'Clock News**. Frank Bough presents the 100th programme of the series, looking back on some of the stories he and his team have covered, including interviews with Jason Donovan and "Gazza". Followed by LWT News and weather

6.00 **The Channel Four Daily**
9.25 **Clive West of the Divide** (1934, b/w). One of 15 "B" features that John Wayne's Westerns from 1933 and 1935, this revenge western is one of the best. Determined to avenge the murder of his father, Wayne goes undercover to join an outlaw gang and find the killer. With Virginia Brown Fend, George "Gabby" Hayes and Yakima Canutt. Directed by Paul N. Bratton
10.30 **Broken Silence**. The series of Spanish documentary films exploring animal behaviour continues with this look at the care, nourishment and defence of the young (r)
11.00 **As It Happens**. Andy Kershaw reports from inside Womwoud Scrubs (r)
12.00 **The Parliament Programme** presented by Sue Cameron
12.30 **Business Daily** introduced by Susanah Simons
1.00 **Sesame Street**. Educational fun for the young. The guest stars are the Four Tops (r)
2.00 **Painted Tales**. Gwen John's Artist's Room in Paris. Original series of animated stories designed to arouse an interest in art (r)
2.15 **Easy Heat**. It. Gentle exercises for the over-fifties with Pat Rowlandson (r)

- BUSINESS AND FINANCE 25-31
- LAW 31
- MOTORING 33
- YOUR OWN BUSINESS 35
- SPORT 36-40

Scobie takes over as Brent chief

THE struggle to keep Brent Walker Group afloat is about to be settled, bankers close to the affair said, as the group named Kenneth Scobie as chief executive and deputy chairman. Mr Scobie, an accountant and corporate rescuer, was already a non-executive director.

The leisure and property group is trying to restructure £1.4 billion of borrowings, but the plan is being delayed by three banks, two of them Japanese, unhappy about injecting fresh money.

The company's bankers were yesterday trying to bring those banks into line, with a firm resolution expected in the next 48 hours. Bankers were encouraged by the news of the appointment, particularly as the firm's new non-executive directors were growing impatient.

Service sector leads way as average earnings fall to 8.5%

By PHILIP BASSETT AND COLIN NARBROUGH

AVERAGE earnings are continuing to fall, new government figures showed yesterday, although most of the decline is being driven by the service sector, with wage increases in production and manufacturing industries rising again.

Michael Howard, the employment secretary, praised the fall in average earnings, saying it was the "sharpest fall in earnings growth since the summer of 1982".

Across the whole economy, the underlying increase in average earnings fell from 8.75 per cent in April to 8.5 per cent in May. This will trigger 8.5 per cent rises for Britain's police officers.

The April figure of an underlying rise of

8.5 per cent has been revised to 8.25 per cent, while the provisional figure for May was 8 per cent.

The decline in service sector increases, put down to lower bonus and other payments, masks less encouraging figures for the government elsewhere in the economy. In manufacturing, for instance, the 8.5 per cent figure for April, thought to have been static from the month before, has now been revised upwards to 8.75 per cent because of new information on pay settlements. May's figure remained at this new level.

Extremely weak bank lending in June underlined the lack of confidence among consumers and companies, suggesting that further interest rate cuts will be needed to

secure early recovery. Bank of England data showed a seasonally adjusted £400 million rise in bank and building society lending last month, the smallest monthly increase since the series began in 1983, after a £2.6 billion rise in May. The lending figure is widely considered a good guide to confidence.

Industrial output figures provided no evidence of recovery either. The Central Statistical Office's estimated trend decline in factory output, was still an annual 6 per cent in May, a half point down from the April rate. Manufacturing has been in decline for the past year.

Norman Lamont, the Chancellor, admitted on Wednesday that Britain was still in recession, but stuck to his forecast of a

consumer-led recovery in the second half of this year.

Manufacturing output fell 0.4 per cent in May, giving a 1 per cent drop in the latest three months compared with the previous three, a much gentler decline than in late 1990. Output of investment goods picked up in May, probably reflecting German demand.

With safety work depressing energy output, overall industrial production fell 0.5 per cent in May. On the three month comparison, it was down 0.9 per cent. The estimated downturn in industrial production slowed to an annual 3 per cent from 3.5 per cent in April.

M0, the narrow money measure, rose an annual 2 per cent in June, up from 1.6 per

cent in May. Simon Briscoe, economist at Midland Montagu said M0 pointed to the economy "bouncing along the bottom". Weekly banknotes data indicated that the annual rise in M0 was set to slow again in July.

Higher oil imports widened the American trade deficit 1.5 per cent to \$4.57 billion in May, commerce department figures showed. Import demand was weaker than expected.

The number of cars produced in Britain in June was 125,126, a rise of 7 per cent on June last year. Production for export was 158 per cent higher, reflecting output from new Japanese-built plants.

Comment, page 27

WEEKEND MONEY TOMORROW

PROFILE

Television is not known for its under-achievers and Richard Dunn, head of Thames, is no exception. His mother taught him he could accomplish anything, he tells Gillian Bowditch.

CAR TROUBLE

Car owners with hire purchase agreements are selling to a growing number of companies who offer to take over their debt too. Liz Dolan reports.

LEASE LETDOWN

Despite government plans to allow leaseholders to buy the freehold of their property, thousands of home owners will miss out, Lindsay Cook writes.

US dollar 1.6665 (+0.0140)
German mark 2.9547 (-0.0041)
Exchange index 90.7 (+0.2)

FT 30 Share 1969.0 (-8.5)
FT-SE 100 2547.3 (-13.7)
New York Dow Jones 3002.68 (+23.92)
Tokyo Nikkei Average 22908.71 (-151.99)

EXCHANGE RATES

RISE: CEC Heath 451 1/2p (+11p)
Barnhill Central 553 1/2p (+11p)
Anglia TV 'A' 188 1/2p (+11p)
Central TV 730p (+5p)
Sci TV 530p (+5p)
GKN 351 1/2p (+8p)
Smiths Ind 258 1/2p (+11p)
Hawker Siddeley 558 1/2p (+9p)
FALLS: Dean & Deane 67 1/2p (-14p)
Commercial Union 513 1/2p (-3p)
Thomson Corp 436p (-11p)
Read Int 78 1/2p (-12p)
United Biscuits 375p (-15p)
Cadbury Schweppes 243p (-7p)
Leeds United 559 1/2p (-11p)
British Aerospace 717 1/2p (-25p)
BAT 570p (-50p)
ADT 570p (-50p)

INTEREST RATES

London Bank Base 11%
3-month interbank 11 1/4%
3-month sight bill 10 1/4%
US: Prime Rate 8 1/2%
Federal Funds 5 1/4%
3-month Treasury Bill 5.80-5.85%
30-year bond 9 5/8%
90-day 9 1/8%

CURRENCIES

London: £1.6665
New York: \$1.6675
DM 2.9547
DM 2.9547
FF 163.65
FF 163.65
Yen 136.85
Yen 136.85
Index 90.7
Index 90.7
ECU 16.8520
ECU 16.8520
ECU 1.438418
ECU 1.438418

GOLD

London: £370.35 pm 300.00
New York: \$370.35 pm 300.00
Comex: \$370.35 pm 300.00

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent (Aug) \$20.50 bbl (\$20.40)
Denotes latest trading prices

RETAIL PRICES

RPI: 134.1 June (1987=100)

Government stake sale put in doubt

BT ready to force enquiry into OfTel plan

By ROSS TIEMAN INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH Telecom is set to force a Monopolies and Mergers Commission enquiry into regulation of its prices if it is unable to reach agreement with Sir Bryan Carsberg, director general of OfTel, the company's chairman warned yesterday.

The threat from Iain Vallance throws into doubt plans by the government to raise £11 billion this autumn by selling its remaining 48 per cent stake in Britain's biggest company. "If we cannot reach agreement with Sir Bryan, we have no option but to allow a reference to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission," he told shareholders at the annual meeting in Nottingham.

Mr Vallance criticised Sir Bryan and Peter Lilley, the trade secretary, for going back on a previous regulatory deal, agreed in March after months of negotiation with BT. Under new proposals, unveiled by Sir

Bryan on July 3, BT will be unable to recover the costs of providing access to its local telephone network from competitors until their share of the telecom's market reaches 15 per cent.

"The effect of the new proposals is radically to alter the basis of the agreement," Mr Vallance told shareholders. If BT accepted Sir Bryan's proposals, its position in the profitable business and high-use domestic segments of its market would be seriously eroded, he said. It would be left with a core of some 17.5 million unprofitable domestic subscribers.

"You would be financing the selective and lucrative market entry of our competitors, many of whom are American companies with monopolies in their protected home markets," he said.

Mr Vallance likened BT's plight to that of British Airways, which abandoned contributions to the Conservative party this week partly in

protest at government decisions that increased competition on its route network. "Acceptance of OfTel's latest proposals would stand in the way of the fulfilment of our ambition - shared by the government - of becoming a successful market-driven company operating on a global basis," he said. It would be "returning to that web of regulatory interference and control, from which privatisation was intended to allow it to escape".

John Raisman, the non-executive deputy chairman of BT, who headed the remuneration committee that awarded a much-criticised 43 per cent pay rise to Mr Vallance, is to retire from the board this autumn. BT officials insisted his decision to retire had nothing to do with the row over the increase in Mr Vallance's pay to £536,303.

Despite criticism from shareholders, Mr Vallance said he had "no regrets" over accepting the rise. He declined to reveal the charity to which he had given his £150,000 performance-related bonus.

In his first public response to the furore, Mr Vallance said he had to accept a pay rise in order to allow the company to hire other senior executives without paying them more than it paid its chairman. He revealed that BT had completed the search to fill a new post, that of group managing director, whose identity has yet to be revealed.

The National Communications Union said it was recommending its members to accept BT's offer of a 7.3 per cent pay rise for 120,000 engineers and staff.

Clowes 'convinced City was after him'

By OUR CITY STAFF

PETER Clowes became convinced the Bank of England and the Stock Exchange were out to get him after government inspectors started examining the British arm of his investment empire, an Old Bailey court heard yesterday.

Ross Hyett, former marketing director of the Analysis Group, which invested up to £12 million of clients' money in Barlow Clowes fund management companies, told Anthony Hacking, QC, for Mr Clowes, that in 1989, a year after the Barlow Clowes group collapsed, he was interviewed by DTI inspectors and told them Mr Clowes was "convinced that somebody or a body in the City was after him".

Mr Clowes, aged 50, and three executives in the Barlow Clowes group face various charges of conspiracy, theft of clients' money, and making false statements to induce clients to enter investment schemes.

The other three defendants are Peter Naylor, Guy von

Cramer and Christopher Newman. The four deny all charges.

Mr Hyett told Mr Hacking he was involved with Mr Clowes in setting up a Gibraltar firm called Technical Studies, which the prosecution has claimed was one of a number of offshore companies used to launder millions of pounds of investors' money.

Mr Hyett said the company's aim was to sell investment products, including those of Barlow Clowes, to English expatriates in the Iberian Peninsula and, as far as he was concerned, it was to be funded personally by Mr Clowes and was not a Barlow Clowes "umbrella". He later resigned his directorship.

The court also heard from solicitor Roger Anders, a solicitor, who acted in the 1985 phase of Sand Barnes, a £365,000 property, which the prosecution claims was bought by Mr Naylor with funds "milked" from clients' accounts.

The trial continues today.

Customer charter, page 3



Sir Bryan: change of plan



Additional charges: Roger Levitt, arriving at Bow Street magistrates court yesterday

Levitt faces new charges

By ANGELA MACKAY

ROGER Levitt, chairman of the collapsed Levitt Financial Services Group, yesterday faced four new charges of theft and false accounting, relating to the personal funds of Frederick Forsyth, the spy thriller writer. Mr Levitt, aged 41, appeared on remand at Bow Street magistrates' court in London more than seven months after his company failed with liabilities of more than £30 million. His bail of £500,000 was continued until December 18 when he is due to reappear in court.

Four new charges were read out in court. The first alleged that between May 9 and May 12 last year, Mr Levitt stole £400,000 from Frederick Forsyth, and the second that he stole £113,400 from Mr Forsyth between July 10 and July 13 last year. The other two charges allege false accountings over the two sums involved.

Mr Levitt already faces two charges of stealing £400,000 belonging to a client between October 1987 and December 13, 1990, and £265,000 belonging to another client between June 1986 and December 13, 1990.

Jonathan Goldberg, QC, for Mr Levitt, successfully applied for the conditions of bail to be changed to allow Mr Levitt to keep his passport to make legitimate business trips

abroad as long as he notified police in each case.

Mr Goldberg said that, since the demise of Mr Levitt's company, his client had become the personal manager of Lennox Lewis, the

boxer who had won the British and European super-heavyweight championship at Wembley. Mr Levitt would accompany his client to his next fights in Canada and America.

GUS rises despite tough conditions

GREAT Universal Stores, the Scotch House to mail order group, has emphasised, with publication of its 1991 profits statement, that trading conditions remain difficult and should not be underestimated. GUS said the first quarter of its current financial year had been difficult.

Pre-tax profits in the year ended March 31, rose from £417.3 million to £431.3 million on turnover of £2.52 billion (£2.69 billion). The final dividend rises from 23.5p to 25.5p a share, making 37.5p (34.5p) for the year.

GUS ordinary shares rose 11p to £15.86p. The A non-voting shares, reflecting disappointment that no plans to franchise them were announced, fell 31p to £12.59p.

The group's investment property portfolio was valued at £692 million at year-end.

Temps, page 27

Stanley slides

Stanley Leisure, the bookmaking and casino group, suffered a 15 per cent fall in pre-tax profits to £7.1 million in the year to April 28 (£8.4 million). Earnings were 14.4p (15.9p) restated for last year's one-for-five scrip issue. A final dividend of 3.05p a share (2.83p) makes 4.85p (4.5p) for the year.

Temps, page 27

Receivers in

Receivers have been appointed to Hughes Food, the food services company that lost £6.8 million in the first six months of the current year. Trading in the company's USM quoted shares was suspended at 4p on Wednesday. Hughes' debts were estimated at £19 million.

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British Gas close to deal on Russian oil project

By MARTIN BARROW

BRITISH Gas is in the final stages of securing agreement for a pioneering joint venture to produce oil in northern Russia.

The company is combining with Gulf Canada Resources to take a 50 per cent interest in KomiArcticOil, a joint venture with Soviet agencies, with a total investment of up to £520 million.

Initially, the project will focus on two fields about 1,500 kilometres northeast of Moscow.

The partners will develop a new oil field and increase production at a nearby established field, with combined reserves of 2.2 billion barrels. The first phase involves production of up to 20,000 barrels per day within three years and investment of £200 million. If all phases are implemented, total investment could rise to £520 million.

British Gas and Gulf Canada will hold 50 per cent of the

venture as equal partners and the Soviet Union will hold the rest. The project will be managed by a board with representatives from Soviet agencies and the Western oil companies.

The Soviet Union has been seeking ways of encouraging major oil companies from the West to participate in the rescue of its ailing oil industry.

Although the Soviet Union remains the world's largest oil producer, output has fallen from 12.5 million bpd in 1988 to 10.65 million bpd and is still in decline because of a decaying infrastructure and the maturity of its fields.

British Gas has also announced the purchase of a 25.5 per cent stake in a new gas distribution company serving the region around Leipzig in eastern Germany, following an agreement with the Truedanstaalt, the trust agency responsible for the privatisation of industry in eastern Germany.

Its partner will be Vereinigte Elektrizitätswerke (VEW), which will hold a 25.5 per cent stake. The rest of the shares will be held by municipalities in the region.

Earlier this month, British Gas agreed to acquire a 24 per cent interest in a new distribution company to serve the Halle region in Germany. British Gas has also been offered a share in Verbundnetzgas, a gas transmission business.

In Britain, PowerGen, the privatised electricity generating company, has agreed to buy gas from the Hamilton field off the Northwest coast.

PowerGen has applied to the energy department for consent to build a combined cycle gas turbine power station on the site of a former coal-fired power station at Connaught Quay, Clwyd, close to the Hamilton field.

John Wakeham, the energy secretary, has announced approval of the development of the £1.1 billion Nelson field in the North Sea. Orders worth £300 million have been placed already.



Looking to the future: Hayter Brockbank, the combined Lloyd's agency, plans to increase its underwriting capacity from £145 million to £210 million for next year, John Hayter, the chairman, says. The agency aims to acquire further managing and members' agencies. He expects most growth to come from existing and new names, of which "there is no shortage".

Peel drops to 'worst' result

By COLIN CAMPBELL

PEEL Holdings, the property group that owns 68 per cent of Manchester Ship Canal, said that high gearing and depressed market conditions have led to its worst results as a property company.

Peel, reporting for the year to end-March, showed a pre-tax loss of £8.48 million, compared with a restated pre-tax profit of £3.32 million for the previous year.

The final dividend is cut from 7p to 2p share, leaving shareholders with a total 3p a share for the year, compared with 10p last time.

The pre-tax loss was struck after a £6.21 million exceptional provision against trading properties and aborted development expenditure.

Below the profits line, Peel made a net £24.4 million extraordinary charge, of which £17.5 million relates to losses on the sale of investment properties.

Shareholders' funds at balance sheet date fell from £367.5 million to £251.9 million, equivalent to a fully diluted net asset value of 28p (41p) a share.

Peel shares were down 1p at 114p.

Bad debts slash NatWest profits

By NEIL BENNETT, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

NATIONAL Westminster, Britain's second largest bank, is struggling to break even after further heavy losses in its American subsidiary caused by bad debt provisions.

Natwest Bancorp, operating in New Jersey and New York, has announced a net loss of \$85.1 million in the second quarter, making record losses for the half year of \$276 million. This, together with massive provisions at home, is said to have wiped out the bank's profits in the first half, according to a new forecast by Smith New Court, the broker, compared with a £431 million profit in the same period last year.

Britain's leading banks are estimated to have written off £2.5 billion in bad debts in the first half of this year, or more than £550,000 an hour, ravaging their balance sheets. Smith's report forecasts that the big four profits will be only £452 million in the half year. Midland is expected to show a further loss of £25 million, and cut its dividend again.

News of NatWest's troubles comes a day after Norman Lamont, the Chancellor, found there was no cartel among banks to fix interest rates, and that most business customers are getting the full benefit of base rate cuts.

The banks' bad debt provisions are 72 per cent above the levels a year ago, and also higher than in the second half of 1990, when the banks hoped they had peaked.

The provisions against the high levels of company failures and personal bankruptcy has smothered the benefit the banks have enjoyed from the small increases in lending rates and fees as interest rates have fallen.

Goode Durrant slides to £7.4m

By JOHN BELL

MICHAEL Waring, chairman of Goode Durrant, the industrial and trade finance group, gave a warning last September, of grim times ahead. Yesterday, he disclosed group profits down from £13.5 million last year to £7.4 million in the year to end-April.

There is no sign of an upturn, Mr Waring told shareholders. He said: "We expect only limited relief over the coming months in the general economic problems facing British industry and we, therefore, remain extremely cautious."

The board has recommended an unchanged final dividend of 3.25p, making an unchanged total of 5.4p for the year. Profits from vehicle and equipment hire were down from £5.2 million to £1.9 million. They dropped in the housebuilding and construction division from £1.6 million to £862,000.

Motor distribution profits held steady at £1.96 million, but pre-tax income from other

Reed gives warning of fall in first half

By MARTIN WALLER

THREE company chairmen were gloomy at their annual meetings in London with little optimism for at least the first half of their current years.

Peter Davis, the Reed International chairman, said the publisher had started the year with many of its markets more depressed than a year ago. Because of this and the short-term costs in the television listings market, the results in the first half would be well below last year.

The second half was more important, however, and comparisons then would be against the difficult period ending in March 1991, which included the Gulf war, the main impact of the recession and Reed's restructuring costs.

Two factors would, he hoped, assist the performance this year. Reed was now starting to obtain much of the benefit from the restructuring costs of last year, while the substantial proportion of profits coming in dollars and the strengthening of the American currency would help. Reed's shares fell 10p to 437p.

David Hubbard, of Powell Duffryn, the fuel and distribution business, told shareholders that prospects for the first half of the current year were not encouraging. The shares fell 7p to 278p.

The recession continued to affect the businesses in Britain, and there was no evidence of any improvement, although overseas activities were faring better.

Sir Oscar DeVill, of Meyer International, the builders and timber merchant, said first-half sales would not match those of the first half of last year, but the performance should improve on the second half of last year.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Allied-Lyons to sell Babycham brand

ALLIED-Lyons, the food and drinks group, has put its British cider, perry and wine interests, including the long-established Babycham brand, up for sale as part of its strategic review of its businesses. A spokesman said that the operations did not fit the wine and spirits division's strategy of concentrating on "premium, international brands".

The cider and perry products are marketed and produced by Showers, of Shepton Mallet, Somerset, employing about 950 people. The British wine products are produced in Whitechurch, near Bristol, by Vine Products and Whiteways, which employs about 420. Turnover of the operations during the year to March 2 was £155 million, but the profits are undisclosed. Baring Brothers is handling the sale.

Jones pays same again

PRE-TAX profits at Jones Stroud (Holdings), insulation and elastic maker, fell to £4.49 million (£6.22 million) in the year to end-March. Turnover stayed at £60.4 million. Earnings were 16.42p (21.82p). The payout stays at 8p after an unchanged final of 5p. The company said interim profits this year would be below last year's.

Elbief falls to £29,000 loss

ELBIEF, which makes leather goods accessories, photograph frames and clocks, suffered pre-tax losses of £29,000 in the year to end-April, compared with pre-tax profits of £178,000 last time. Losses per share were 0.19p (earnings of 0.92p). The dividend is cut to 0.5p (0.64p), with a final of 0.31p.

Hampson declines

HAMPSON Industries, the industrial holding company, incurred an attributable loss of £1.52 million, after an extraordinary charge of £4.36 million against the cost of restructuring its loss-making printing machinery business.

In the year to end-March, pre-tax profits fell from £7.9 million to £5.04 million, and earnings from 7.17p a share to 4.55p. A final dividend of 1.773p a share makes a total of 2.373p for the year, compared with 2.318p for the previous year, after adjusting for a one-for-ten scrip issue. John Wardle, the chairman, said printing machinery interests suffered substantial, though undisclosed, losses.

Issue success for Irish Life

THE tranche of the Irish Life share issue offered to the public has been subscribed three times over. A total of 41,000 valid applications were received for 121 million shares, as against the 39 million shares on offer to the public. Two-thirds of the applications came from policyholders applying on the special priority forms.

Prism rises to £761,000

PRISM Leisure's mix of music, computer games and public house quizzes notched up an 88 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £761,000 in the year to end-March. Sales during the year increased 19 per cent to £12.5 million. The final dividend has been increased to 3.45p (3p), to make a total of 4.95p (4.5p).

Clinton faces drop in profits

By OUR CITY STAFF

SHARES in Clinton Cards, the specialist greeting card retailer, fell 20p to 163p after a warning that profits for the year to February 1 would be materially lower than in the previous year.

Don Lewin, the chairman, said that depressed consumer spending had affected trading severely during the first half of the year when the company traditionally incurs a small pre-tax loss.

This year's interim deficit would be "significant" compared with last year's first half loss of just £173,000.

In the year to end-January, Clinton increased pre-tax profits 44 per cent to £5.77 million.

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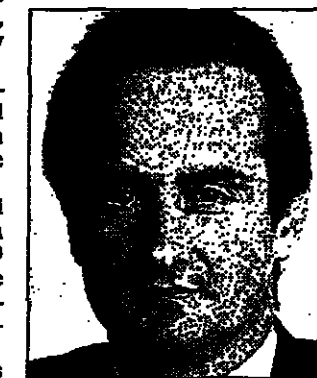
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Approach for Edmond

SHARES in Edmond Holdings, the housebuilder that operates mainly in Humberside and North Yorkshire, rose from 36½p to 42p after a bid approach. The company, formerly Allied Residential, declined to comment further. The approach is thought to



Waring: remains cautious

have come from another quoted builder and not from AF Budge, a private construction company with a 29.7 per cent holding.

Pre-tax profits last year were £3 million (£4.18 million), the total dividend stays at 1.85p.

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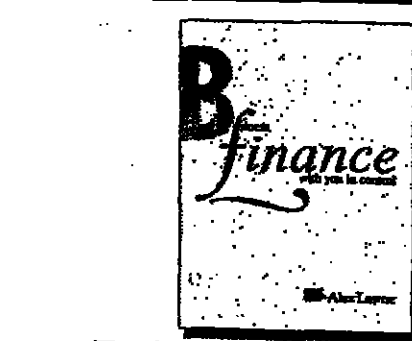
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Seal of bad housekeeping

COMMENT

The G7 mutual admiration society has finally camped, but the government will naturally try to preserve the political and economic halo effect of the summit for as long as possible. To the extent that John Major made an excellent summit chairman, any political benefits that may soon become apparent in the opinion polls will be well deserved. But the government's claims to have won a G7 seal of good housekeeping for its relentless policies of deflation will not stand up to examination for long.

In fact, yesterday's figures on manufacturing output, personal borrowing and unemployment suggested that the economic complacency which has spread from Lancaster House to stock markets around the world may not outlast the week.

The unemployment figures may have been better than most analysts had expected, but this was mostly a reflection of the catastrophic trend of redundancies in the wake of the Gulf war.

Had it not been for the average monthly jump of 94,000 in the

jobless total between February and April, June's unemployment increase of 60,000 would hardly have been seen as a cause for satisfaction.

The June figure was higher than any recorded before December last year and was not significantly different from the increase of 68,000 in May. Given the distortions caused by the collapse of business confidence at the time of the Gulf crisis, it would be rash to infer a sharp improvement in the trend simply by comparing the May and June figures with the disastrous statistics for the previous three months.

Of course, unemployment figures tend to lag the economic cycle, although this is less true of the rate of increase of unemployment. However, the manufacturing figures published yesterday conveyed a similar message: the economy remains firmly in the grip of recession, although things obviously are not

as bad as they seemed at the time of the Gulf war. The CBI industrial trends survey and other measures of business confidence are likely to confirm this picture.

What, then of the G7's declaration that there are "increasing signs of economic recovery" and that the "medium-term strategy endorsed by earlier summits" must be maintained?

The first statement, of course, applies to the entire world economy. This is indeed growing more strongly, although Germany, the country of greatest relevance to Britain, is actually slowing down. The point about maintaining the medium-term strategy, by contrast, seems to apply only to Britain.

As Norman Lamont proudly pointed out on Wednesday, Britain is the only G7 member

with lower inflation today than a year ago. It is also the only G7 country in deep recession and one of only two (the other being France) to have maintained the deflationary policies preached by the G7 but certainly not practised by America or Germany.

All this is perfectly consistent. What is less clear is why Britain's stock market should be hitting record highs, even if these could be justified in Frankfurt and Wall Street.

Poor banks

If the Treasury's report into bank lending had left a shadow of suspicion that Britain's banks were operating a cartel, it could have been dispelled by a casual glance through the forecasts for the banks' interim

results. Cartels are supposed to make money.

Many banks by contrast, even the vast National Westminster, are struggling to record a profit this year. The meagre revenue gains they have achieved by pushing through interest rate and bank charge increases have been swamped by the colossal bad debt provisions. These are currently running at more than £500,000 an hour, day and night.

Bankers are praying that the second half will bring some relief from the torrent of company failures and personal bankruptcies. The picture is mixed; some saw a slight fall in their write-offs last month, but others say the rate of provisioning is still accelerating.

The historical evidence is not promising. In the last recession, bad debts reached their highest point in 1984, long after the recession was over. While bad debts in the corporate sector may be slackening, the rise in

unemployment suggests the personal sector will continue to deteriorate.

The outlook for debt recovery is not appealing either. Bankers admit that in the late Eighties they were lending on much weaker security than previously. In previous recessions banks have been able to write back specific provisions once property and asset values started to rise and disposals became possible. Today, the banks recognise that many of their loans, particularly those to the service industries, are gone for good.

The banks cannot stand this punishment for long. National Westminster's capital ratios are already sinking close to the Bank of England's minimum standards. If the provisions continue into next year it may be forced into a share issue. Its rivals will soon face the same pressure.

The optimistic assessment of the banks is that profits will soar once the recession recedes, helped by strict cost control, reduced competition and higher revenues. There are troubled waters to cross, however, before that happens.

Predictions for jobless go from bad to worse



Poor relationship: Vasso Papatheodorou, EC commissioner

FORECASTING unemployment levels when the number of those out of work is on the rise is a tricky business. Too high a prediction, and critics line up to shoot it down. Too modest an estimate, and the figures overtake it so quickly as to cast doubts on the credibility of the forecaster.

As the government yesterday announced the 15th successive rise in unemployment in the UK, taking it to more than 2.3 million and 8 per cent of the working population for the first time for three years, two new reports will try to walk this precarious line.

One from the European Commission, also published yesterday, takes the first course: a study, published today, by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, takes the second.

Publicly, the British government takes no line. Though assumptions about unemployment lie beneath its principal economic calculations, no forecasts about the level of unemployment are now published. But leaked minutes of a meeting in May, between Sir Geoffrey Holland, permanent secretary at the employment department, and leaders of the training and enterprise councils, suggest the government is working on at least 2.6 million unemployed by October.

Faced with yesterday's EC estimate that unemployment in the UK will rise above 3 million, ministers took the traditional course of attacking the report. Robert Jackson, the employment minister, described it as speculative, hopelessly flawed and a "shoddy piece of work". Tony Blair, the shadow employment secretary, however, said it was a "devastating indictment" of government policy.

The government's response to the EC report is hardly helped by the poor state of relations between Vasso Papatheodorou, the EC social affairs commissioner principally responsible for it, and UK employment ministers. In fact, the EC's work on employment is generally judged to be of a high standard, and the section in yesterday's report on skill shortages tends to confirm that view.

In the context of what the commission accepts is a deterioration in overall EC economic performance, however, its estimate that unemployment across the Community will average 9.2 per cent of the workforce in 1992 — sharply up from the current

average of 8.7 per cent — could virtually have been designed to draw political flak from the UK government, especially since much of the blame for it is put at Britain's door.

The EC report points out that these rises are not evenly spread. A large part of the in-

crease so far experienced has been in the UK, which, it says, is likely to show further large rises in the number out of work, reaching 3.06 million, or 10.8 per cent, next year.

The EC report is more modest in its assessment of unemployment in Britain. Its forecast

that UK unemployment will end up at 2.4 million, 8.2 per cent, this year and at 2.7 million, 9.6 per cent, next year, is very much in line with the mid-range of general economic estimates. Nevertheless, its estimates still make depressing reading: across the range of the 24 OECD countries, unemployment is expected to rise by 3.6 million this year alone, to bring the total number out of work among them to 28.4 million.

A substantial proportion of that increase comes from America, the OECD says. The organisation forecasts that unemployment there will rise this year by 1.5 million. It suggests, however, that the number out of work in America will then decline.

For Britain, the picture is different: unemployment here will rise by 800,000 this year — so far, according to yesterday's figures, it has already gone up by 458,700 — but it will then go on rising, to 2.7 million. Not only that, but the increase in UK unemployment is predicted to be larger than in any other country analysed by the OECD.

Like the EC, the OECD warns of re-emerging skill shortages coexisting with high unemployment, which despite the large number of people out of work, could push up wages and thus increase inflationary pressures.

None of this comes close to what Michael Howard, the UK employment secretary, wants to hear, especially in what may turn out to be the long run-up to a general election. He and his ministers know that even if, as the government is forecasting, the economy does pick up in the second half of this year, unemployment will lag a long way behind and will continue rising for some months.

But rising more slowly, perhaps: Mr Howard and his advisers are satisfied that yesterday's unemployment increase was at the bottom end of the scale of forecasts, and seemed to confirm their tentative view of a month ago that the rate of increase may now be slowing. Employment department officials accept that figures in future months may yet jerk upwards again. But if the slowdown in the rate of increase continues, then regardless of forecasts from the EC, OECD or anyone else, ministers will resign themselves to settling in for the long haul, until the jobless figures stop rising.

PHILIP BASSETT
Industrial Editor

GUS the tortoise is still ahead

TEMPUS

GREAT Universal Stores should have all the abilities to be a hare, but by tradition prefers to be the tortoise that finally won the race.

For the 44th year, GUS has turned out higher pre-tax profits at £431.3 million (£417.3 million) for the 12 months ended March 31, and has again raised the dividend: a 25.5p (23.5p) final makes 37.5p (34.5p). The group boasted a net asset value of £11.50 a share at the year end, compared with £11.37 a share previously.

However, and notwithstanding the death of Sir Isaac Wolfson, GUS has no immediate intention of moving out of, or away from, its traditional business base — home shopping, Burberry's and Scotch House, overseas retailing, and consumer finance and business information services. Nor has it any fresh thoughts on giving the A shares the vote. They fell 31p to 1,259p yesterday.

Profit from property sales was £12.2 million (£10.4 million), though the year-end valuation of properties slipped from £816 million to £692 million.

The precise net cash position will only be published with the annual report in October — that is after the current interim period has

ended, though quicker than the December 19 payment for the final dividend. But net cash will have risen from the previous £443.5 million. Net interest received within the £431.3 million profits figure will also have risen from the previous net £78 million contribution.

Last year's high interest rates served GUS's consumer finance/investment division well. Turnover fell 25.7 per cent to £574.3 million, but profits held steady. Burberry's and Scotch House suffered from the Gulf war, but margins were held. Home shopping and related interests made higher profits at £185 million (£170.3 million).

GUS might well benefit from lower interest rates that would boost consumer spending, but because of its cash mountain, the group may lose more than it gains as interest rates continue to fall. As for mail order, Britain could see a more determined challenge from the Continent this year to the mail order industry, of which GUS claims a 40 per cent slice.

Profits should creep forward to £435 million this year, and at £15.86, up 11p, the

ordinary shares trade on 13.5 times earnings. The A shares at £12.59 trade on 10.7 times earnings.

In the short term, there are more exciting hares to chase in the stores sector. Investors wanting to avoid profit shocks should still ride with the tortoise.

Stanley Leisure

THE recession may not have dented investors' enthusiasm for provincial casinos but it has tempered their spending habits.

Stanley Leisure said the average drop fell by £5 to £90, hardly a major setback but as the company keeps 18 per cent of the takings it has been enough to puncture a record of profitable growth.

Even so, the provinces are out-performing casinos in London, which depend heavily on high rollers from overseas. Stanley also had to contend with an unusually warm summer and football's World Cup so an unchanged profit of £5.3 million from casinos is a respectable result.

Growth of 14 per cent in the racing division to £6.2 million, even though no new outlets were added, is quite an

achievement. The company has not yet benefited from the uncertainty over the ownership of its two major rivals, William Hill and Coral, but in the longer term the impact can only be positive.

A interest charge of £3.48 million, up from £1.93 million, is to blame for the fall in pre-tax profits from £8.4 million to £7.1 million. A lower tax charge cushioned the impact on earnings, down by just 8 per cent to 14.4p a share. The dividend rises from 2.85p to 4.85p with a 3.05p final.

This year, with interest rates in decline, there is no reason why profits from existing operations should not recover to the levels of 1989/90, hoisting earnings back to 16.4p.

But the company makes no bones about its interest in at least some of the betting shops now being actively touted by Bass and will be keen to buy outlets from Brent Walker.

The question being asked is how far will Stanley, with gearing of 35.5 per cent, will allow its balance sheet to be stretched in the name of market share. The uncertainty undermines the shares, down 5p to 138p yesterday compared with a 12-month high of 171p, even though the rating of 8.4 is not demanding. A strong hold.



THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Sailing close to the wind

DESPITE events on the Solent last weekend, I hear that all the staff of Hobson Audley, the City solicitor, were back at their desks this week. The firm's yacht crew, led by Nick Lighthbody, property lawyer, was an hour adrift of the race leaders when Gerald Hobson, managing partner, watching from a luxury schooner, was heard to mutter that they need not bother to turn up for work on Monday. His host, America's Cup helmsman Chris Law, expressed the opinion that the team may not have crossed the finishing line by then. Law promptly ran his craft on to a mud-bank, where the stranded Hobson had the chagrin of watching his marooned crew sail past as they recovered to finish fourth.

Looking ahead

TIME is running out for those of us who are ahead of our time. The invest in Britain

Campaign, a pressure group dedicated to ensuring the nation's future, has only one more nominee to pick for its first far-sighted award. The July suggestion is Helen Sharman, Britain's first astronaut, and another worthy citizen will be chosen next month to go to the final at The Savoy in September. Margaret Charrington, the campaign director, confesses to being a little disappointed with nominees for the myopic award, a reverse contest for those lack-

ing vision. She says: "We have had several suggestions but they are nearly all politicians or road planners."

MOIRA Rainer has obliged her jeweller husband Gerald by presenting him with a son outside shop hours. The baby, weighing 7lb 5oz, was born at 3.45am on Wednesday. Rainer, always a man to choose his words carefully, was not immediately forthcoming with a name, although his secretary says he has "something Biblical" in mind. City Diary suggests Jen.

Clearing banks

BANKS exonerated by Norman Lamont, the Chancellor, of accusations of overcharging, have also been cleared by the National Chamber of Trade, the confederation of local commercial bodies. The chamber asked its 150,000 members for details of bank practices that harm small businesses. And received a deafening silence. Bernard Tennant, the director general,

says: "The isolated criticisms seem to indicate that it is certain managers who do not maintain the expected high standard of behaviour, rather than a general poor standard of banking."

Third time lucky

BEST wishes to Panmure Gordon, stockbroker to small companies, in dealings with its latest client, Clinton Cards. The purveyor of festive and celebratory verses was with Laurence Prust until Prust's stockbroking side closed a year ago. Clinton then followed the team to Schroders, but condolences were again due last month when Schroders closed its small companies side. Choosing a third broker in the three years since Clinton came to the market was no problem. Barry Hartog, finance director, says: "People in the City move round so much we know someone at every broker." He added: "Panmure Gordon does not think we are the kiss of death."

RODNEY HOBSON



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COMPAQ

BNP's proposal prompts warning EC may probe plan for Air France stake

By WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU, EUROPEAN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENT

THE European Commission has issued a warning that it may investigate a plan by Banque Nationale de Paris, the French state-owned bank, to take a stake in Air France, prompting fears of a further clash between European competition policy and French industrial policy.

The warning follows an announcement by the two companies on Wednesday. Air France aims to raise Fr1 billion, but it is not yet clear whether BNP plans to subscribe to the whole sum, which would amount to a stake of about 10 per cent.

Air France needs new capital after suffering a Fr717.2 million loss last year, and experienced further difficulties this year, caused by the Gulf war and the continued slowdown in the world economy. In addition to the proposed

BNP stake, the French government has pledged Fr2 billion in new capital, a decision that is already being investigated by the commission.

A spokesman for the commission said yesterday that it was too early to tell whether the proposed BNP stake would need to be notified to Brussels, and, if so, whether the commission would then go ahead with an investigation.

The issue at stake is whether BNP arrived at the decision out of a commercial or financial interest, or whether it is acting on instructions from the government.

In the latter case, the capital increase would fall under the category of state aid, which the commission might deem illegal, although this is sometimes difficult to prove.

The announcement by BNP

and Air France came on the same day as the commission outlined its open-skies policy, an ambitious proposal designed to deregulate Europe's airline industry.

Next week, the commission will vote on a proposal, which would force state-owned companies to send detailed accounts to the commission annually. Such a regime would allow the commission to establish the amount of aid that state-owned companies receive from their governments.

The proposal is likely to prove controversial in some countries, especially France, which has one of Europe's largest state sectors.

The proposal also signals a toughening in the commission's attitude towards state-owned companies and state aid.

Hawkins made bankrupt

PROMISING an appeal to the Privy Council, Allan Hawkins, former chairman of the collapsed Equitcorp group, was undaunted after being declared bankrupt in an Auckland court yesterday (Richard Long writes from New Zealand).

Mr Hawkins' Equitcorp group collapsed two years ago after a six-year, worldwide buying spree, including a 61 per cent stake in GPG, the London merchant bank. Last December, Mr Hawkins and six others were charged with frauds totalling NZ\$440 million (£151 million).

Yesterday's bankruptcy judgment follows a drawn-out court battle, in which Mr Hawkins sought to keep control of some of his family companies, in order to rebuild his personal fortunes.

The judge said the bank wanted to ensure that Mr Hawkins lost the opportunity to manipulate his assets in order to put them out of the reach of creditors.

While the ANZ Bank won a NZ\$7.3 million judgment, Mr Hawkins also faces NZ\$564 million in claims as an Equitcorp director, a NZ\$10 million BNP claim and a NZ\$6.1 million Bank of China claim.



Undaunted: Allan Hawkins will appeal against order

Spies add to Tokyo business scandals

FROM JOANNA PITMAN IN TOKYO

JAPANESE police are getting little rest, now that corporate raids have virtually become a daily fixture. The latest scandal to hit Japan's business world concerns allegations of corporate espionage.

Tokyo police yesterday raided the headquarters of Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, the heavy machinery manufacturer, searching for documents thought to have been stolen from Komatsu, Mitsubishi's arch-rival and the world's second largest manufacturer of construction equipment.

On Monday, police were busy raiding Toyo Umpanki, the Osaka forklift manufacturer, also suspected of corporate espionage against Komatsu, its competitor. On Tuesday, police arrested Kiyoshi Ota, a Yokohama information broker, for allegedly breaking into Komatsu's headquarters and attempting to steal confidential documents detailing model development plans and product prices.

Umpanki officials admitted that they had been paying for pilfered information on Komatsu products since 1988, although they denied knowing how photocopies of secret documents were obtained.

Also in Tokyo yesterday, a posse of officials from the finance ministry raided offices of Nomura, Yamichi, Daiwa and Nikko, the big four brokerage houses, in search of evidence on allegations that the companies had guaranteed compensation to favoured clients to cover losses made on stock and bond transactions.

The four houses have admitted paying out Y124.5 billion (£551 million) up to March last year as compensation to selected clients who had seen their investments in the Tokyo stock exchange dwindle in line with the lurching Nikkei average. Japan's securities and exchange law prohibits a guarantee of compensation. A team of 44 ministry officials will check whether any compensation was made by the settlement of accounts this March.

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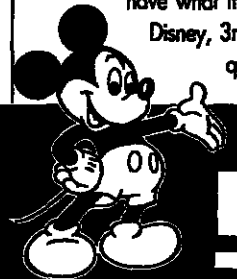
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Maersk Oil og Gas AS is a company in the A.P. Moller Group acting as exploration, development and production operator for Dansk Undergrunds Consortium (DUC), a venture between A.P. Moller 39%, SHELL 46% and TEXACO 15%. D.U.C. has considerable acreage in the Danish North Sea with an average daily production of approximately 130,000 BOPD and 300 MMscf/d. Maersk Oil is the sole producer in Denmark and DUC is supplying approximately 90% of the oil and gas consumption in Denmark.
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ATHLETICS

Soviets are in the running for roubles

By DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

IGOR Ter-Ovanesyan was not exactly sounding like Topol yesterday, but nor was he singing his riches, despite the ten million roubles at his disposal. It was not enough, he was saying, to keep Soviet athletics in the manner to which it is accustomed.

In April, Ter-Ovanesyan signed an agreement with the Soviet Sports Committee which virtually gave him autonomy over athletics in his country, on a ten-million rouble budget.

That will continue to see the Soviet Union as one of the sport's superpowers for a while. But Ter-Ovanesyan's worry is a few years from now. Once the national squad is catered for, there is not much left.

So, while in Edinburgh for the McVitie's Challenge against Britain tonight, Ter-Ovanesyan, the Soviet federation's president, has been following the lead of the Group of Seven and the International Monetary Fund, read Andy Norman, promotions officer for British athletics, and anyone else who might have advice for Ter-Ovanesyan on how his federation can make money.

"I understand that hungry people cannot be interested in athletics, but I have my own world of track and field inside Soviet society and I cannot

wait for the commercial situation to be more economically successful," Ter-Ovanesyan said. Under the new system he has cut the number of coaches in the federation's employ from 120 to 80, and cut from 500 to 420 the size of the national squad.

"I have to start thinking about how to get money," he said. "Before it was not my task. I have no experience in this but, in modern society, there are a lot of people who can help me."

The federation has no sponsorship, but the agents have been looking for business. "We need the money for the development of our young athletes. I understand my money must come from the big contracts like Andy Norman's do. Independent television in the Soviet Union is growing and there is the possibility for us to make money there."

But, to do that, Ter-Ovanesyan must also understand the need to field athletes whom the public wants to see. Only one of his 11 European Cup winners or European champions competes tonight. Britain field 11, a profusion of leading performers guaranteed to keep television happy.

□ Dave Long, the marathon runner, has pulled out of Britain's team for the world championships because of a knee injury.

S Africa invited back

ROME (AP) — South Africa's 15-year exile from international athletics was ended yesterday with an invitation to send a team to next month's world championships in Tokyo.

The International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) announced a temporary affiliation for the unified South African governing body. The temporary affiliation will run until August 20, when the IAAF congress is expected to accept South Africa

as a full member. A decision on whether the South Africans will accept the Tokyo invitation is expected next week.

In the interim, South Africans are allowed to compete only in Africa and against Africans. In order that South African athletes may qualify for the world championships, results recorded from January 1, 1990 will be recognised. Thirty-eight South Africans have achieved the qualifying standards.

SPORTS LETTERS

County prejudices at Lord's

From Mr Nick Ruston

Sir, Like Woodrow Wyatt (Article, July 15), I was at the Benson and Hedges Cup final at Lord's. However, I cannot agree with his view that the booing of Wasim Akram was racially founded.

In any team sport at top level supporters are extremely partisan. While there is seldom a logical explanation for it, these supporters often "love to hate" an opposing player.

In Wasim's case, his sour demeanour attracted this feeling. Sitting among a large Worcestershire contingent in the Compton stand for two days, I heard only one mildly racist remark. Generally, the booing was good natured and arose through derision (and some delight) at seeing a top-class player on the opposing side getting well and truly rattled while bowling. It carried on from there.

If the Worcestershire crowd was truly this ideal has receded even further now that Yorkshire have taken a step in the wrong direction.

Yours truly,
K. C. HARRISON,
5 Tavistock,
Devonshire Place,
Eastbourne, East Sussex.

subjected to a particularly offensive racist remark. Immediately, several of the members asked the club secretary to take action against the culprit who was duly removed.

Yours faithfully,
NICK RUSTON,
Beech House,
Thicket Road,
Houghton, Huntingdon,
Cambridgeshire.

From Mr K. C. Harrison
Sir, Congratulations to Worcestershire on winning the Benson and Hedges Cup at Lord's. Worcestershire? Not one member of the XI was born in the county.

By contrast, seven of the Lancashire side were born in the county and another, Paul Allott, was born in Altrincham, Cheshire, only two or three miles away from Lancashire.

O for the days when county players were natives of their own county of birth. But the return of this ideal has receded even further now that Yorkshire have taken a step in the wrong direction.

Yours truly,
K. C. HARRISON,
5 Tavistock,
Devonshire Place,
Eastbourne, East Sussex.

Economies of spin

From Mr David Jenkins

Sir, In the second round of the NatWest Trophy last week, the most economical bowlers were: Bowling, Davis, Hemmings, Reeve (Warwickshire did not play a spinner). Needham, Croft, Williams, Lewis (seamers). In the first round, Salisbury and Mart (with Udal second for Hampshire).

Wiley, second in run-saving for Leicestershire, and

Embury, within one run of second for Middlesex, were the only other spin bowlers employed.

The proportion of wickets taken by spinners, 22.4 per cent, was roughly the same as overs bowled. Is there not a message here for county captains and selectors? Slow bowlers are clearly under-used. Use more spin and give away fewer runs.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID JENKINS,
16 Arlington Road, W13.

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The case for Sunday racing

From Mr Peter S. Winfield

Sir, If the possible incidence of illegal betting remains one of the major obstacles to authorising Sunday racing (report, July 10), I am much saddened. Surely the quality of life for the vast majority is the point to concentrate upon, not the possible illegal attitude of a few.

If society was structured with these thoughts in mind, the life of the nation would grind to a halt for fear of bank robberies, terrorism and other attempts to interfere with the orderly everyday pursuits of our mainly law-abiding population.

I urge the home secretary and all who are concerned with realising this injustice to think in positive and not negative terms. There is an abundance of precedents to put in hand the authorising of Sunday racing without delay.

Yours sincerely,
PETER S. WINFIELD,
White Rose Cottage,
George Road, Coombe Wood,
Kingston-upon-Thames,
Surrey.

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PETER S. WINFIELD,
White Rose Cottage,
George Road, Coombe Wood,
Kingston-upon-Thames,
Surrey.

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Surrey.

Yours sincerely,
PETER S. WINFIELD,
White Rose Cottage,
George Road,

